TEN CENTS A COPY

The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME VIII | NEW YORK SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1931 | NUMBER 22

PRESIDENT WILSON AND SECRETARY DANIELS WATCHING A BASEBALL GAME

Christmas Poetry

IT is a little pathetic, the way in which we cling at Christmas to symbols which refer to a life as different as possible from our own. If Christmas cards were to be taken literally, we rattle off on our holidays in a coach and four, horns blowing, mufflers fluttering, stolid peasants in smocks watching along the frozen roadsides. We pause at a half timber inn for mugs of ale, then trot on through the deep snow to a manor hall where silver is reflected in the polished oak and boozy, red-cheeked squires sprawl over their port, while a stable boy sings a Christmas ballad. Does this country suffer, then, from a mother complex, and once a year express its longing to enter again into the body corporate of the old country, where the ancestors of some sixty millions of us would find themselves violently alien? Not at all. This is a literary, not a psychological phenomenon. The old English Christmas which we broadcast at from five to ten cents apiece, comes from books, not from history. It was created for our imagination by two writers who have had the good fortune to be extensively read at Christmas: Dickens, of course, but also more than is usually realized, our own Washington Irving. Without "Pickwick" and "Bracebridge Hall" we might have picked up a very different Christmas symbolism.

Which suggests an opportunity for modern writers, who may well hope that with the acceleration of our times they may get their Christmas ideas adopted before they are dead.

They might begin with Christmas card poetry, for a great many things can be done to Christmas card poetry without damaging it. Indeed, if all the poets in "The Dunciad" had trained up apprentices to write badly, and if the decline in merit had been continuous for two centuries, the resulting poetry could not be more insipid, more banal, more utterly commonplace than the stanzas which can be bought anywhere this week by the piece or the gross.

* *

The modernists, and particularly the modernists of that school which seeks to heighten consciousness by holding the magnet imagination over the rank and file of words in their syntactic order, and punctuation wherever it was, could make a real contribution to Christmas poetry. As for example, typographically—

ME— R
. ,
. of the year ,
. on the day ,
. happ- ,
. iest ,
. .
R Y
. ,
. cheer ,
. good ,
. all ,
. .
CHRI — ST
. .
i send you ,
. ,
MA — S
. . . . . .

The intellectualists, whose creed is an escape from the obvious, have left this

(*Continued on page 392*)

Eagle Passage

(In memory of Vachel Lindsay)

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

NOT the stone now—
For the stone shall be shattered;
Not the earth now—
For the earth shall be shed
As vapor
From wings upthundering,
Strong wings overhead.

Loudly crying
Your challenging cry,
Spirit undying
You take the sky,
Aloft flying
With the flying cloud,
Wild and proud.

Not the head bowed,
But the head lifted
For a banner of beauty to the world unfurled:
Not night on us
But light drifted
From a new world.

Western star,
Blaze bright, blaze high;
Where you are
Only death can die.
O strong wings
That throb forever
Through a golden sky!

Wilson: Idealist and Statesman

By the Hon. JOSEPHUS DANIELS

LIFE AND LETTERS OF WOODROW WILSON 1910-1914. By RAY STANNARD BAKER. Two volumes. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1931. $10.

THE earlier volumes of the authorized "Life and Letters of Woodrow Wilson" carried him through his youth and professional and university career. The first of the latest volumes opens with his emergence upon the political stage. The volume begins with his leaving Princeton, which had been his home for a quarter of a century. There he had won his spurs. There he had received deep wounds. Wilson and his wife (she was his true partner and inspiration) walked the one-half mile from the artist's studio to the depot, all alone, deeply stirred with emotion. It was at Princeton he had "found himself" and had come to know "who he was and what he had to do." The scars of conflict over his attempts to prevent the side shows crowding out the big tent were forgotten that morning. Only memories of quiet happiness welled in their hearts. They were not only leaving Princeton and home. They realized they were giving up the quiet life of reading and art, and were entering the "glare of publicity" which had no attraction for either. Mrs. Wilson, always the more ambitious of the two, carried in her heart deep satisfaction that her faith, plighted long ago to a noble soul, had received national endorsement. She was the gayer of the two. "No doubt," he wrote, "when the plunge is over we will fare well enough, but just now we would halt with genuine shivers, and we are not as lighthearted as we might be." Neither had qualms about Wilson's ability to meet the tests, more difficult than then appeared on the horizon, as the train carried them to the high station of "consecrated opportunity."

The second volume closes with the heart story, brought out by the recollections following her death, of the devotion of Woodrow Wilson and Ellen Axson. She had been his guide in many things—he had leaned on her sound judgment. Her talent as an artist was free from the artistic temperament, often lacking in practical wisdom. She never knew of the outbreak of the World War in which her beloved was to be the great casualty. The last information of a public character that cheered her dying hours was that the bill for better housing conditions in the crowded alleys in Washington, which she had inspired, had become the law. "God has stricken me almost beyond what I can bear," he wrote when she died in August, 1914. Later in his own last illness, memories of her came back to him and he said to his daughter, Margaret, "Wasn't she the most radiant person that ever lived?" Mr. Baker closes the volumes, recording her passing with the words: "It was a bleak and war-torn world toward which, on the following day, the President turned his face."

Before the call to leadership in the national councils (which Wilson had hoped would come to him as a boy and as a student at Princeton), Mr. Baker's volumes are filled with the story of stirring days—epoch days—in his life and the life of New Jersey. From his battle with the Jersey bosses to his conflict with the forces of imperialism, he is depicted as immersed in domestic issues and the problems of the World War, and framing the charter of a warless world—achievements which were to bring him immortality.

First of all Mr. Baker disproves the myth that George Harvey was the first to suggest Wilson for President and that Harvey "made him President." Long before Harvey's espousal, in 1902 in Indiana, to be precise, the suggestion was made. It germinated. It was not until 1906 at the Lotus Club dinner that Harvey "proposed Woodrow Wilson, the honored guest of the occasion, for President of the United States." Mr. Baker says: "the man who presented him was at the moment scarcely more than half in earnest." As a matter of fact, "journalists do not 'make' public men; they discover them." However, he does not minimize Harvey's large part in securing for Wilson the governorship of New Jersey, and focusing national attention upon Wilson's availability for the presidency. He also proves Wilson's real appreciation and gratitude. The story of Col. Harvey's zeal in urging Mr. Wilson's candidacy is detailed, including a dinner attended by Thomas F. Ryan; August Belmont; Mr. Laffan, of the *Sun;* Mr. Ochs and Mr. Miller, of the *Times,* and the celebrated Harvey-Watterson dinner, which was the occasion of Harvey's break with Wilson and his later support of Clark. The Ryans and Belmonts looked Wilson over and didn't like his views. No more did Wilson like their attitude. Chemist Harvey couldn't make oil and water mix. The Harvey break was the best piece of luck that came to Wilson in the early days when Wilson was reluctantly acceding to demands that he be-

This Week

"ON UNDERSTANDING WOMEN."
Reviewed by FREDA KIRCHWEY.
"FIRST NIGHTS AND FIRST EDITIONS."
Reviewed by H. THORNTON CRAVEN.
"ANZA'S CALIFORNIA EXPEDITIONS."
Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS.
AUSLANDER'S "SONNETS OF PETRARCH."
Reviewed by CHARLES HALL GRANDGENT.
"THE ALMOND TREE."
Reviewed by TAYLOR SCOTT HARDIN.
"TIME EXPOSURE."
Reviewed by ROBERT CANTWELL.
"THE CORCORANS."
Reviewed by H. W. BOYNTON.
A LIST.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.
WHAT IS THE ANSWER?
By GEORGE S. OPPENHEIMER.
"POWER AND GLORY."
Reviewed by ROYAL J. DAVIES.

Next Week, or Later

"THE LITERARY MIND."
Reviewed by HENRY S. CANBY.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

come a candidate. The truth is, as Mr. Baker proves, in Wilson's case the office sought the man, not that it rushed up and kidnapped him unawares, but that party leaders saw the need of a new type and the rank and file felt that here was the man they had been looking for, and Wilson was "a willin' Barkis."

Perhaps the first address made by Wilson, after the public became familiar with his name as a possible candidate, was his speech at the Jamestown Exposition on July 4, 1904, on "The Author and Signers of the Declaration of Independence." He called "fictitiously increasing the value of stocks sheer thefts," and declared "the only way to evade socialism is to put an end to the rule of trusts. When we dissolve them, we check and hamper legitimate undertakings and embarrass the business of the country." How would he end monopoly? He said:

> One really responsible man in jail, one real originator of the schemes and transactions which are contrary to the public interest, legally lodged in the penitentiary, would be worth more than one thousand corporations mulcted in fines, if reform is to be genuine and permanent.

He afterwards elaborated this point of view under "Make Crime Personal." On January 17, 1910, he "spoke like some old Hebrew prophet" to the great bankers of New York City with J. Pierpont Morgan at the head table.

> The trouble with you bankers (he said) is that you are too narrow minded. You are not interested in the development of the country, but in what has been developed. There is a higher law than the law of profit. You bankers, sitting in this provincial community of New York, see nothing beyond your own interests and are content to sit at the receipt of customs and take toll of all passers-by. You should be broad-minded and see what is best for the country at large.

Morgan, who sat next to Wilson, was deeply offended and let Wilson know he [illegible] the remarks personal. Wilson

These two speeches insured for [illegible] the hostility, which ripened into organized opposition, of the giant captains of industry. He was to feel it afterwards, particularly when he obtained a currency system which they vainly sought to defeat. However, their opposition caused the masses to turn to the man who could demand that trust magnates be sent to jail and tell great bankers to their faces that they took toll but added nothing to real values. These speeches that offended money magnates did not, however, lessen Harvey's activity, though he was the literary spokesman of Big Business. Mr. Baker asked: "Did Harvey and his backers think Wilson was insincere in these public addresses?" Probably. They had heard other men thunder in public before election and eat out of their hands after election. At any rate Harvey planned to get Jim Smith and other bosses to nominate Wilson for Governor of New Jersey "as the first step to the presidency." The plan succeeded, though the New Jersey Progressives were distrustful of a highbrow and amateur sponsored by reactionary bosses. His campaign developed qualities the people never dreamed he possessed. Wilson wrote: "This is what I was meant for, anyhow, this rough and tumble in the political arena. My instincts all turn that way, and I sometimes feel rather impatient of the restraints of my academic position." Jim Smith, before nominating Wilson, wanted to make sure how he stood on the liquor question. Wilson said: "I am not a prohibitionist. The issue should be settled by local option in each community." Hudspeth told him New Jersey Democrats were strongly opposed to local option. At that time in New Jersey the drys were for local option; the wets against it. "Well," said Wilson, "that is my attitude and my conviction. I cannot change it." New Jersey Democratic leaders accepted him, not because they wished him but because having been defeated successively for many years, they needed a winner. Most of them felt, as Boss Bob Davis, of Jersey City, was quoted as saying, when asked if he thought Wilson would make a good Governor: "How the hell do I know whether he'll make a good Governor? He'll make a good candidate and a good meal ticket for us. That's the only thing that interests me." Wilson's distinguished career as Governor of New Jersey, and his victory over the machine when it sought to defeat the results of the primary and elect the Boss to the Senate, heightened his fame. It also delighted the Progressives who were looking for a man around whom they could rally. It did more: it secured him the nomination for the presidency in 1912. Without that manifestation of what men in the ring call "guts" he might never have reached the high goal.

Mr. Baker is at his best in the illuminating story of how Wilson came into the leadership of the Progessives of the country, even taking the reins from Bryan (with Bryan's approval and powerful assistance), Roosevelt, and LaFollette, and the hard-won conflicts before the Baltimore Convention handed him the scepter of his party. Equally stirring is the account of what happened and how it happened at the Convention that nominated him, after a long contest. He is the only man ever nominated after a competitor had been given a majority ballot vote.

The relations between Wilson and Bryan run through the book, from the time in 1896 when Wilson voted against Bryan, saying to Roland Morris: "Bryan has caught the spirit and instincts of American life but, Morris, the man has no brains," and his leter to Joline in 1907: "Would that we could do something effective to knock Bryan once and for all into a cocked hat,"—until Bryan's resignation from the Cabinet. The severe criticisms of Bryan were made before Wilson had even seen Bryan. Later, upon intimate association, he reversed this early estimate of the man with whom he was to work in perfect sympathy and under-

Wilson's high appraisement of Bryan after close association. The two men in faith in the people, devotion to popular government, belief in Jeffersonianism, hatred of monopoly, and a passion for peace were as alike as two peas in a pod. Bryan was a born Jeffersonian. Wilson intellectually admired Hamilton as shown in his early writings. He came later in life to understand and to appropriate the Jeffersonian principles which Bryan espoused early. Bryan was an evangelist and a crusader by nature, who loved the political arena and the companionship of the multitude. Wilson was an intellectual aristocrat, who was impersonal in his public career, admitting few to close fellowship and holding those admitted by hooks of steel. The deep affection, never broken, between Wilson and his Princeton classmates shines out beautifully on the pages of these volumes. The same is true of the unbroken friendship with coworkers whose sincerity and comradeship were tested and proved. Mr. Baker also fails to give Mr. Bryan the full credit he deserves in the tariff, federal reserve, Panama tolls, Mexican and Japanese issues, though he shows Bryan's loyalty and influence in them all. He does give deserved high place to him in the drafting and ratification of the treaties of arbitration which had in them the germ of the substitute for war, afterwards embodied in the Versailles treaty. Mr. Bryan's great mistake was in his resignation. The differences between him and Wilson were only that Bryan could not bring himself to contemplate his connection with war under any circumstances. Wilson's hatred of war was as deep, but he felt that war was preferable to a Prussianized America, which he envisioned as the alternative.

The story of the relations of Mr. Wilson with other members of his Cabinet, Colonel House, and Congressional leaders is enriched with illustrative incidents. They show what is a truth that is not generally known, to-wit, that no chief executive ever gave quite such free rein to Cabinet ministers or gave them such proof of his confidence and support as did Mr. Wilson. He never sought to retain a member of his Cabinet who expressed a desire to resign. He asked nothing of any member of the Cabinet except wholehearted devotion to the policies laid down after Cabinet discussions. Nothing less made for administrative vigor and success.

Mr. Baker tells of the beginning of the friendship between Mr. Wilson and Colonel House, born out of House's advocacy of Wilson's nomination in 1912:

> There was in House something of the quality that Wilson admired in fine women; something intimate, sympathetic, unarguing. He was a listener, he drew people out. . . . As a matter of fact, House never in his life openly and seriously opposed anything that Wilson desired—once he found out what it was. . . . Wilson liked him. He had qualities that Wilson lacked. He liked to confer and adjust, and he had the time to do it. He was incurably confidential. "Just between you and me and the angels" was one of his characteristic expressions. . . . The writer has never found, in all of Wilson's voluminous correspondence, however intimate, a single word of criticism of Col. House, nor did he ever hear, not even during the in-

CARTOON, BY ROLLIN KIRBY, REPRODUCED FROM "HIGHLIGHTS" (PAYSON)

the once prevalent opinion that Colonel House shaped public policies or was the power behind the throne. House was useful, helpful, resourceful, friendly. Wilson leaned on him for information and assistance, holding him in affectionate esteem and signally honored him. He was never influenced by House in great issues. In graver matters, Wilson depended (after securing all the information House could furnish him, which he did with something like genius, and the views of others he deemed qualified to advise) upon a man by the name of Woodrow Wilson. Nobody else. There was no Warwick in his entourage. There was no man who had the influence with Wilson which Seward sought to exercise in the early days of Lincoln's administration. Every adviser had the weight to which logic and reason entitled him. No more. Personal pull was non-existent and personal friendship had no weight in shaping public policies.

The four big things that engrossed the Wilson administration before the World War were:

1. The tariff. Wilson's creed was: "The power of government to tax should never be used to confer privileges upon individuals or groups of individuals, but should be used always and only to secure general benefits, the benefit of tax-payers as a whole or of the nation as an organism." In that spirit the Underwood-Simmons tariff act was drafted and enacted. Wilson did not write a section of the measure. In fact, he rarely dealt with details. He conferred with leaders, he combatted those within his party who wished "sugar in their'n," and kept in close touch with those who were in charge of the measure. It was a giant task for all concerned. Wilson refused to approve compromises and in that attitude the party leaders in Congress were in accord. Shortly after his election in a public statement he announced he would call a special session of Congress to revise and lower the tariff. He delayed nothing. He knew how Cleveland's tariff acts were mangled because he postponed action. Therefore Wilson lost no time. A member of his Cabinet advised: "Press the tariff act before the offices are distributed." The Democratic caucus's action insured the passage of the measure in the House, but it was a harder and longer fight in the Senate. The bill passed the Senate, however, in September by a vote of 44 to 37. It was "the greatest tariff fight in the history of the United States." Wilson had won his first notable domestic reform.

2. On the very day he signed the Tariff act, Mr. Wilson said "we have accomplished only half our journey." The second step was the currency bill, for "setting the business of the country free." If the fight for the tariff measure had drawn heavily upon his vitality and resources, he was now coming to a joust with the men who had long ruled America by the control of banking and public credit and even the processes of the Treasury. Mr. Baker's account of the evolution of the Federal Reserve is a historical account of a piece of legislation that was designed to decentralize the banking and currency of the country. For years the country had been cursed with money panics. Wilson had as far back as 1897 given thought to the need of reforms, saying in that year "nothing but currency reform can touch the cause of the present discontent. Later he had declared:

> The control of credit is dangerously concentrated in this country. The large money resources of the country are not at the command of those who do not submit to the direction and combination of the small groups of capitalists, who wish to keep the economic development of this country under their own eye and guidance. The great monoply in this country is the money monoply.

He determined to end the money monopoly and accepted the Democratic National Convention's declaration against the so-called Aldrich plan for the establishment of a "central bank." Before he was inaugurated he consulted with Mr. Glass and others about the currency legislation that would meet the needs. As

[illegible] every big banker in America mobilized to defeat it. They wished the Aldrich centralized system. Senator Owen and Mr. Bryan said, first, that "power to issue currency should be vested exclusively in government officials, even when the currency is issued against commercial paper," and second, that the board should be distinctly a government body and "the function of the bankers should be limited strictly to an advisory council." Mr. Brandeis agreed with Bryan and warned Wilson that the "conflict between the policies of the administration and the desires of the financiers and of big business is an irreconcilable one." Finally, after much discussion, and some dangers of serious division, the two ideas of Bryan and Owen were incorporated in the Glass act. McAdoo and others, and Democrats in and out of the House, united in securing the enactment of the measure, a few Republicans also voting for it. Policies of postponement were urged. "Secretary Lane, who had heard disturbing reports from New York, also came to urge upon the President a policy of delay. No member of the Cabinet mirrored conservative opinions more consistently than Lane." Wilson refused to listen to his and like suggestions. The House acted fairly promptly, but in the Senate it required many weeks. The bankers kept up their fight all summer and brought to bear every possible influence to destroy it by proposing maiming amendments. They were able to secure such delay that the measure did not pass until December. Lodge and Root predicted that disaster would follow. "It was without the slightest question the powerful and unyielding pressure from the White House which made possible the enactment of the law." If the Federal Reserve system had not been in operation when the World War opened it is difficult to comprehend how the war could have been so successfully financed.

3. When the Panama Canal was com-

(*Continued on page* 396)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Women in History

ON UNDERSTANDING WOMEN. By MARY R. BEARD. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1931. $3.50.

WOMAN'S COMING OF AGE. A Symposium. Edited by SAMUEL D. SCHMALHAUSEN and V. F. CALVERTON. New York: Horace Liveright. 1931. $3.75.

Reviewed by FREDA KIRCHWEY

MARY R. BEARD'S book is suggestive rather than final, a tempting invitation — which she herself should surely accept—to further, more detailed explorations. With a comprehensive sweep she scoops into a single volume an outline of human history as it concerns women. Is it necessary to assert that such a gesture must leave out more than it gathers in? One is tantalized rather than satisfied by momentary glimpses of women philosophers and poets in Greece, of women rulers in Egypt, of mathematicians and courtesans and learned abbesses and king-makers and murderers, all fitting into the background of their times, not yanked out as they have so often been for mere display as edifying or horrible examples. If the result is sometimes irritating it is not because the book is sketchy or slight, but because it is necessarily abbreviated—like the news reels that snatch you off to the military manœuvers in Berlin before you are half through watching Mrs. Lindbergh crane her neck to see the flooded areas of China. I should like to read whole volumes about certain women or periods that Mrs. Beard leaves with a paragraph.

Nonetheless, the author has done what she set out to do with a good deal of deftness: she has repopulated the ages with the female members of the human race, and has demonstrated that the place of women in history as it was made has little or no relation to the place of women in history as it has previously been written. She documents her contention with a breath-taking array of evidence, the more impressive since she, too, is limited by the omissions of other historians. She does not seek to show, as some critics of her book seem to have assumed, that women have rivaled men in the fields of public affairs or learning or religion or the arts. She merely puts in their proper places the achievements of persons whose names have generally been ignored or whose work has been minimized because they were women. And when the record is unfolded it offers facts that can be used by feminists and anti-feminists alike, if the book is to be employed as an arsenal.

Since the dim, almost-lost periods when women seem generally to have dominated group life or at least established and carried on the first functions of civilization, the public importance and recognition of their role has surely diminished. They may have been responsible — as Mrs. Beard and contemporary anthropologists agree—for most of the arts and industries that catered to the earliest demands of settled living: cooking and the making of utensils, the guardianship of fire and of the sacred oven; probably the development of agriculture and the use of herbs for healing; textile weaving, house construction, the care of animals, and the rich variety of art forms that were applied to vessels and materials. But the later, large-scale development of this culture has been dominated by men, not only in popular belief and conventional history, but in the pages of Mrs. Beard's volume. Men have set the stage for the drama of civilized life, grabbed most of the best parts, taken the applause, and walked off with the flowers.

That they have been able to do so is their triumph, and it can be laid to any of several causes. It can be attributed, as it generally is, to woman's lesser capacity or to man's overreaching ego. Or it may be that women have never ceased to be the creative, inventive, fruitful creatures who founded the civilized arts. Those arts in their early forms contributed to and grew directly out of women's collective and biological functions. To care for children and to invent techniques and tools for weaving clothes to cover them are parts of an economic and emotional whole. But to discuss philosophy with Socrates or to run a factory in America is to set up conflicts with many deep impulsions. And so, perhaps, woman lost the center of the stage only because civilization grew away from the roots of life; and mankind has ever since charged her with a lack of the very abilities she had been the first to display.

Mrs. Beard indulges in no such loose speculations. She is content to show that whoever dominated the scene, the drama of life was in all ages bisexual. In her picture of developed civilizations, beginning with that of Greece, she shows the prominence of women in a multitude of shifting roles — as oracles and teachers and poets, as rulers and scientists, even as warriors and athletes. And if any generalization emerges from the careful particularity of her story, it is the rather obvious one that people—including women—achieve most when most is expected of them.

A symposium is usually a clumsy vehicle of expression; and a symposium on women is definitely repellent, hard even to open. I am glad, however, that I overcame this resistance sufficiently to read some of the chapters in "Woman's Coming of Age," a symposium edited by Samuel D. Schmalhausen and V. F. Calverton, who have been responsible for other similar omnibuses of opinion. Much of the book can safely be skipped, but Lorine Pruette has contributed a truly distinguished essay entitled Why Women Fail, and the chapter on women as artists by Rebecca West is provocative and somehow invigorating. As an unintended appendix to Mary Beard's book, this collection is surprisingly apposite, and often amusingly opposite as well. In Samuel Putnam's chapter, The Psychopathology of Prostitution, one is offered a depressing view of the status of all women in early Greece, even the most free and privileged groups of foreign women and hetairai, while Joseph McCabe's blast on How Christianity Has Treated Women is a record of oppression that omits almost all mention of the outstanding feminine achievements cited by Mrs. Beard even in the ranks of the Church itself and in its darkest ages. I can imagine nothing more entertaining than a detailed review of "Woman's Coming of Age" written by the author of "On Understanding Women."

Recently, in defining the word "Serendipity" Dr. Leslie Hotson said, according to the Haverford College daily, "that it was coined about 1754 by Horace Walpole. Walpole wrote an account of three officers who journeyed through the mystic, elfin land of Serendip and constantly met with entirely unexpected adventures. 'Therefore,' [said Dr. Hotson] 'Serendipity is the capacity for discovering things you aren't looking for.'"

Books and Music

FIRST NIGHTS AND FIRST EDITIONS. By HARRY B. SMITH. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1931. $3.50.

Reviewed by H. THORNTON CRAVEN

"COMIC opera would be all right," observed W. S. Gilbert "if it were not for the music." Harry B. Smith in his "First Nights and First Editions" quotes this pungent dictum for what it may be worth.

In reviewing, however, his own voluminous contribution to light opera, Mr. Smith gallantly refrains from Gilbertian acidity. He has a good word for most of the scores for which he has supplied verbal structure. At the same time, he does deplore the scant attention accorded the art of the librettist. Mr. Smith believes it to be an art and he should know. For he has turned out in his own time more than two hundred books, usually with garlands of lyrics, for operettas and musical comedies. His delightful book of memories really constitutes a history of the so-called lighter side of the American stage for more than a generation. His achievements include the still vital "Robin Hood," with its lovely woodland verses fashioned to De Koven's charming music, "The Serenade," with a Victor Herbert score, innumerable other pieces with the same composer, and a staggering profusion of frameworks for both operetta and its stepchild, musical comedy. Mr. Smith even sired the modern revue, for he wrote the first "text" for the first "Follies (1907), and numerous glittering, if amorphous, shows put out by Ziegfeld.

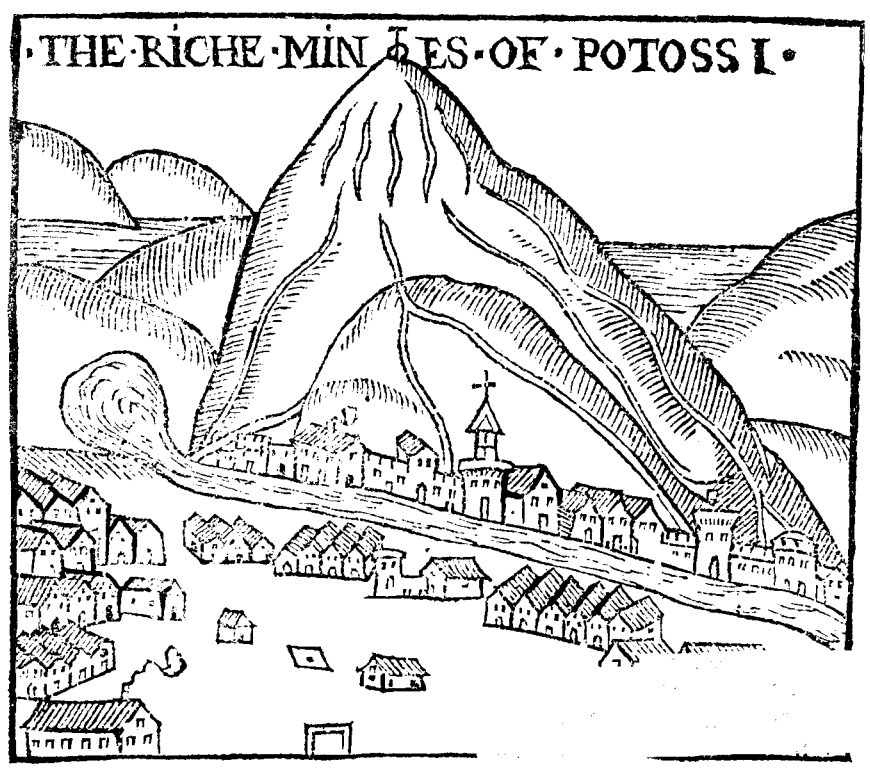
The history of native musical comedy—using the term in its broadest sense—thus becomes the autobiography of Harry Bach Smith. Incidentally, he admits consanguinity with John Bach McMaster and this tie perhaps accounts for the accuracy and particularity of detail with which Mr. Smith handles an elusive subject. Theater-wise folk should revel in these memories, which, though random and breezy are painstaking.

Away from the footlights, Harry Smith has flourished as a fervent bibliophile. His reminiscences emit much more glee over a first edition "Pickwick" or a "Lamia" leafed by Fanny Brawne than over any resplendent comic opera triumph. As a book collector, Mr. Smith lets himself go. As a "book" compiler for composers, he writes modestly, but without affectation, of himself, and furnishes simultaneously a rich pageant of one province of the American theatre from the late 'eighties to the present day.

Nearly all the anecdotal recollections are of the better sort. One of the most amusing explains that mysterious notation on the playbill of "The Serenade": "The plot was derived from an interlude by Goldoni." Mr. Smith was seeking an alibi in case his work should be found even remotely imitative of Genée's operetta, "Nanon."

"There was," he confesses, "no such interlude but it seemed to be perfectly familiar to Mr. Krehbiel of the *Tribune*. . . . He said that I was 'probably indebted to a French Version of Goldoni's work,' as he did not think I could read French."

The chronicler makes the somewhat surprising point that fashions in stage humor change less than in serious drama.



FIRST EDITION IN ENGLISH OF THE FOUNDATION OF ALL SUBSEQUENT HISTORIES OF THE CONQUEST OF PERU.

FROM THE LIBRARY OF THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN WHICH IS ABOUT TO BE SOLD

Early Explorations

ANZA'S CALIFORNIA EXPEDITIONS. Edited by HERBERT EUGENE BOLTON. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1931. 5 vols. $25.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

THESE five handsome volumes represent a discovery and a historical rescue of much importance and of still greater interest. Anza has fallen short of the fame as explorer that belongs to Narvaez and De Soto, Laudonniere and Raleigh. To most Americans he has been not even a name. Yet his obscurity has been largely accidental, and he should now take the rank in the galaxy of Western adventurers which belongs to him. He was the first European to mark a path from Sonora in Mexico to New California; the first white man to open a route across the Sierras; and the first to plant a colony on the shores of the North Pacific. Dr. Bolton assigns him a place superior to that of Lewis and Clark. If Lewis and Clark, he says, had on their return from their explorations stopped in Missouri, raised and equipped a colony of two hundred and forty people, and led them to the Columbia River to hold the country against some foreign power, they would then — and not till then — have equalled Anza's achievement. To this it may be demurred that in his marches from Sinaloa to Monterey in California Anza did not cross a country so difficult [illegible] the loss of only one life.

It is remarkable that till lately little note was taken of the Anza expeditions, for few explorations have been so well described and documented. If H. H. Bancroft had searched the Mexican archives as zealously as he searched book markets and deposits of family papers, he would have found complete records to utilize in his Western histories. No fewer than thirteen diaries for the two expeditions were kept, and a chronicle of the first trip written in the form of a long letter by a priest who accompanied it makes a fourteenth document. Dr. Bolton now publishes twelve of these for the first time. The most important of the diaries are the two written by Anza himself. Altogether, the diary material fills three volumes. To these, Dr. Bolton has prefixed a history of the expeditions and of the San Francisco colony planted by Anza, filling one volume; while he has appended another volume containing the official correspondence relating to the expeditions.

These books—or at least volumes one, two, and three—are not for the specialist alone. While the literary quality of the records kept by Anza, Father Diaz, Father Garces, and the others is far from high, they are always readable, and sometimes graphic. Taken together, these records furnish a remarkably full picture of life in parts of northern Mexico, and along the Tucson-San Francisco route, in the years beginning 1774; of the conditions met by California colonists at that time; of the state of the missions; and of the character, customs, and mentality of the Indian tribes. Dr. Bolton's history of the expeditions is written in popular style (in the best sense of the adjective) and is so good that it ought to be made available separately. At first glance the set seems an exceedingly heavy monument to two exploring trips and the planting of one small California colony; but—with the possible exception of the dull volume of correspondence — it thoroughly justifies itself.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Petrarch in English

By CHARLES HALL GRANDGENT

TO Americans unfamiliar with Italian, the year 1930-31 offers unprecedented opportunities for real contact with Italian literature. For the last twelve months have witnessed the publication of Joan Redfern's translation of De Sanctis's "History of Italian Literature," Jefferson B. Fletcher's superb rendering of the "Divine Comedy," and now this welcome interpretation of Petrarch's Sonnets* by Joseph Auslander. As a general thing, we read translations as a matter of duty, because we feel that in the interest of culture it is our business to have some knowledge of such and such a foreign masterpiece. Real enjoyment, aside from the satisfaction of enlarging our outlook, we scarcely expect. The glamor has to be supplied at second hand, from our faith in other people's appreciation, from our imagining on that basis what the effect of the original must be. In the cases now under consideration, however, the allowance we have to make is reduced to a minimum: we are brought very close to the state of an Italian reading the works in his own language. In fact, we are scarcely conscious that we are dealing with a foreign reproduction; and, when we bring that fact to our consciousness, we have the conviction that we are perusing verses that Petrarch, for instance, would have written, had he been an Englishman of a later day.

For a prose work, such as De Sanctis's masterly discussion of Italian civilization and letters, the achievement, though difficult enough, seems less marvelous than the task of turning one's self into an English Dante or an English Petrarch. Confronted with these greatest of poets, the very reputation of the originals is almost enough to strike one dumb with fright. To produce on the English reader an effect comparable to that produced on an Italian by the Italian text: that is the desideratum—a goal to be attained only by a real poet thoroughly at home in both languages. How few translations have been made by real poets! And so often the work is not really good, even assuming that inspiration is not required! So often the current is rough and jolting, indicative of the throes of difficult production. With Petrarch such a defect is peculiarly irritating; for Petrarch is essentially smooth. He has indeed an habitual smoothness hardly found before him and seldom found again until the days of Ariosto and Tasso. In this respect he reminds one of the English verse of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His evenness, together with his continual use of the sonnet form, may give one a superficial impression of monotony. Yet how mistaken such an impression is! How many different moods are voiced in the easily running sonnets, from the airy fancy of *Erano i capei d'oro all'aura sparsi* to the sensitive melancholy of *Solo e pensoso i più deserti compi* and the stately remorse of *Padre del cielo, dopo i perduti giorni!* These varying moods are caught and faithfully reflected by the sympathetic Mr. Auslander, who has verily made his own the spirit of the poet. As we read his lines, then we follow close upon the varied turns of Petrarch's emotional course.

An intricate road it is to follow; for Petrarch, unchanging in his love of beauty, is forever changing in almost every other respect. Petrarch is frequently called "the first modern man," a designation justified, it would seem, on more grounds than one. Conspicuous among his "modern" characteristics is his complexity. He strikes us distinctly as a person of many more facets than any of his predecessors. He cannot be enclosed in a formula, nor in a considerable series of definitions. Possibly this impression is to some extent illusory. Perhaps his apparent complexity is due in part to the fulness of our knowledge of him. His verse, rich as it is in contrasts, shows us only a restricted number of his sides. For a closer acquaintance we must turn to his very copious correspondence. Not until we come to really modern times do we find another great man who has so frankly and abundantly revealed himself. And the many-sided human being there exhibited is expressed in some measure in the "modernity" of his kaleidoscopic verse. Even more violent contrasts, to be sure, are visible in the lyrics of Dante. Would he seem to us as "modern" as Petrarch, had he been a daily and intimate letter-writer?

However that may be, Petrarch has left us sufficient evidence of his own complexity. Not all of this complexity, indeed, crops out in his poetry; and, in his poetry, some features of it are reserved for poems other than sonnets. Only the sonnets are to be found in Mr. Auslander's volume. The ingenious *sestine* and the majestic *canzoni* are lacking. One almost wishes they had been included, notably the famous *Spirito gentil*, so long associated with Rienzi in the mind of readers. Even more desirable, perhaps, is the *Chiare, fresche, e lucide onde*, so enticing and so puzzling. This last characteristic suggests, perhaps, a valid reason for their omission: the rendering of the *canzoni* would have involved the answering of many important and hotly debated questions—many more than are involved in the sonnets. Even in a text without annotation, some lines would have stirred the critical reader to animosity. This thought, while reconciling us more or less to the exclusion of a series of superior poems, suggests another question: would it have been better to add a few explanatory notes—about as many, for instance, as Leopardi furnished, aside from his discussion of problems? Such notes surely would have facilitated understanding of some sonnets whose subject is not fully elucidated by their titles, on the other hand, it would have been next to impossible, in the simplest annotation, to avoid controversial interpretation, and controversy evidently lay outside Mr. Auslander's purpose. Let us, then, be content, and more than content, with what he has chosen to offer us: to wit, Petrarch the Sonneteer—an English sonneteer, published without display of erudition or presentation, as Petrarch himself no doubt would have preferred.

That the English sonnets tell the same tale as the Italian ones can be said without reservation. And they are good English sonnets. They do not try to ape too closely the Italian model. We are often told that English verse never can give the same kind of pleasure as Italian, because English rhymes are normally monosyllabic, whereas the Italian language runs naturally to rhymes of two syllables. The translator's aim, however, must be to cause a certain reaction in the English reader, a reaction corresponding to that caused in the Italian reader by the original. Now, to the English reader, a long series of dissyllabic rhymes does not give the mellifluous impression that it gives the Italian, whose language naturally lends itself to such a flow. Aside, then, from the prohibitive difficulty of creating such a monstrosity in English, the product, if possible, would not serve its purpose. Some years ago, I read a version of the first canto of Dante's *Commedia in terza rima* with all the rhymes feminine. Not only was the result harrowing esthetically: it was achieved only at the expense of introducing a lot of extraneous concepts, since not one of the rhyme words corresponded in sense to a rhyme-word of the original. On first opening Mr. Auslander's book, one fears that he has attempted such a trick; for the first sonnet there is all in feminine rhymes, and so is the octave of the second. After that, however, normal English verse prevails, the dissyllabic rhyme turning up only occasionally, as it might with an English author.

Mr. Auslander's sonnets, however, are of the Petrarchan type, as one would naturally expect. In fact, in our day, even in English, we hardly accept any other. Nevertheless, the sonnet form has undergone manifold modifications. From the moment of its invention by the early Sicilian poets, probably by Giacomo da Lentino, it was subject to considerable variation. We have the *sonetto candato*, the *sonetto rinterzato;* Dante has left us two examples of the latter type. In the arrangement of the rhymes, too, there has been some uncertainty. Fundamental, in Italy, has been the division into two parts, one of eight lines, one of six. To be sure, the Elizabethan sonnet, in England, departs from this model, transforming itself into three quatrains plus a couplet, thus sacrificing the peculiar effect of the original model—the effect of a longer air in a major, followed by a shorter one in a minor key. In the earliest output the scheme seems to have been, in the octave, simply two alternating rhymes; in the sestet, either a similar arrangement of two new rhymes or a pattern *abc, abc.* The scheme now familiar, however, was not long in appearing, and won the preference of Dante, who used it beside several others. Petrarch's preference, when he appeared on the scene, was still stronger—so strong that it established this one type as the standard; for Petrarch was for centuries the model lyric poet, imposing not only his excellencies, his delicacy and smoothness, but also, and especially, his faults—his tendency to conceits and his weakness for puns. Can the latter be reproduced in an English version? For an answer, one turns with curiosity to Mr. Auslander's text; and there one finds strict renunciation, the *laura* and *laureta* being either ignored or simply transferred, with no attempt at translation—doubtless the only wise course.

It is curious, by the way, to compare Dante's estimate of the sonnet with ours. For us, of course, it is a courtly form of verse, essentially literary and conspicuously difficult. This opinion has certainly prevailed since the day of Boileau, who voices it in his "Art Poétique." In Dante's judgment, on the other hand, the sonnet is an inferior type, on a distinctly lower plane than the *canzone,* and far less exacting. The immense vogue of Petrarch was required to exalt it to the pinnacle it now occupies, an eminence on which Mr. Auslander's art will help to maintain it.

Charles Hall Grandgent is professor of Romance languages at Harvard University and was Exchange Professor in Paris from 1915-1916.

*THE SONNETS OF PETRARCH. Translated by JOSEPH AUSLANDER. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1931. $2.50.

Boies Penrose

POWER AND GLORY. The Life of Boies Penrose. By WALTER DAVENPORT. New York: G. P. Putnam. 1931. $3.50.

Reviewed by ROYAL J. DAVIS

AS coarse as if he had sprung from a gutter instead of from an old and highly respected Philadelphia family, unscrupulous and domineering, "Matt" Quay's successor, the last of the "great" party bosses, is presented in these pages with the vividness of a moving picture. The author spends almost no space upon trivial matters like political issues, his object being limited to making his readers see and hear Penrose—to startle them with his grossness, his epigrammatic cynicism, his poise, his uncanny attainment of success and power. To this end there is much quotation of remarks by Penrose and there is also a large number of stories about him, both the remarks and the stories being supplied by persons who knew him. The result is a fairly accurate portrait, although an ill-concealed desire to astonish if not to scandalize results in a tendency to exaggeration. Incidents of importance, such as Penrose's apparently spontaneous winning of Quay's confidence in his first term at Harrisburg, are told in melodramatic style, but also with melodramatic unreality. Omission of dull details sharpens the story, but leaves it incomplete. Penrose is too much a man of magic instead of a human being of certain extraordinary qualities. His decline, however, is set forth as crisply as his rise. "It was romantic," says Mr. Davenport, "to read that from his cell of a room in his Philadelphia home he had dictated the nomination of Harding, but it was also untrue." The paradox of his character was reflected in the paradox of his career—he could be elected Senator by popular vote, but he could not realize his pet ambition, to be Mayor of Philadelphia. Between him and that goal stood the foulness of his private life. And for the bosship of Philadelphia he had to bargain with the Vares. Power he had, but "glory" is a strange word to associate with Boies Penrose.

Christmas Poetry

(*Continued from page* 389)

fruitful field uncultivated. They could write—

Star-led philosophers,
What rustic imperative,
By ox, ass, sheep,
Heads bowed,
Thoughts wild,
Conquers sophistication?

Or phonetically (style of Joyce), where a great belly of connotation stands upon tiny legs of denotation:

Hark, the armorial fishes sing
Tidings of the Newgate ring.
Nunc dimittis, Noël viva el rey.

Or anarchistically (style of Gertrude Stein)—

Coming Merry Christmas and hope having gifts. Turkey, turkey, turkey, tree tinsel. Sing Noël happy, coming Merry Christmas, and hope having gifts.

Speaking personally we shall stick to the good old wares for our Christmas. There will be two kinds of cards on our mailing list. One will show a pink huntsman in a tavern, above a motto—

In the jolly Xmastime
I greet you with this little rhyme,

and the other will have two angels in white gowns and blue ribbons suspended above a snowscape with camels, sheep, negroes, and shepherds, and it will say—

Christmas comes but once a year
So may you have the best of cheer,
And Happy New Year that comes after
I hope may find you full of laughter.

And just to give that hint of distinction which the advertisements say is so important, each card will bear in sparkling mica letters the word Noël (pronounced Nowull), which means Merry Christmas.

What a world!

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

CAN EUROPE KEEP THE PEACE? By FRANK SIMONDS. *Harpers.*

A searching and illuminating inquiry into the controversies and attitudes of European nations in relation to one another.

FROM THIS DARK STAIRWAY. By M. G. EBERHART. *Doubleday, Doran.*

A murder mystery with a hospital background.

TIMES AND TENDENCIES. By AGNES REPPLIER. *Houghton Mifflin.*

A volume of essays by a brilliant writer.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.....*Editor*
AMY LOVEMAN...*Managing Editor*
WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT
Contributing Editor
CHRISTOPHER MORLEY
Contributing Editor
NOBLE A. CATHCART.....*Publisher*

Published weekly by the Saturday Review Co., Inc., Henry Seidel Canby, President; Roy E. Larsen, Vice-President; Noble A. Cathcart, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Subscription rates per year, postpaid, in the U. S. and Mexico, $3.50; in Canada, $5; in Great Birtain, 18 shillings; elsewhere $4.50. All business communications should be addressed to 25 West 45th Street, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 8. No. 21.

The Saturday Review is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

Copyright, 1931, by the Saturday Review Co., Inc.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Three Sisters

THE ALMOND TREE. By GRACE ZARING STONE. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by TAYLOR SCOTT HARDIN

GRACE ZARING STONE'S new novel is concerned with the relationship between three middle-aged sisters, born and reared in the Middle West and transplanted to Washington, D. C., after their father, James Gentry, becomes a Representative. The story opens on July 10th in the late 1920's at dinner in the Gentry house. The parents have been long dead, but the eldest daughter, May, has carried on in the house, an old maid. The occasion, her fifty-fourth birthday, marks the first reunion of the three sisters for ten years. The second daughter, Susan (forty-six), is a pseudo-fashionable divorcée who since her domestic débâcle has been living alone in a small house in the capital. The youngest daughter, Leda, (forty-four), has just returned from Europe with her sixteen-year-old daughter, Marise. Leda's husband, a petty official in the Diplomatic Service, has recently died in Paris, leaving his wife nearly penniless.

All these details (with countless others) are woven retrospectively into the fabric of the narrative. Besides these passages consecrated to gathering up the past, there are also character-exposés of the *dramatis personæ* which are sometimes annoying in that they bring the author downstage in person, her omniscience pinned upon her front like a bouquet. We'd rather have her leave the boards entirely to the actors, with not even a puppet-string to show for her part in the doings. These exposés are often from the author's point of view; but often they are from that of one of the characters. The following example is typical:

> I'll help get her (Marise) something to do, she (Susan) thought. If she were a little older I'd start her out for herself. But she is too young for that. Too young for love too. Poor little wretch! She is like a bird that hasn't got all its feathers yet.

Now I am aware that this form of exposé serves a twofold purpose: it tells the reader something about the character who thinks the thoughts, and it also tells him something about the character at whom the thoughts are directed. But to resort to this primitive kind of analysis immediately brings up the questions: Is the exposition necessary, and if so, is this the best method? In most cases in "The Almond Tree," my answers are negative. Mrs. Stone does not do half with dialogue that she might. Granted that the conversations between such dull people as are in the book are bound always to be dull, the writer's job is to select those fragments from it which will throw the most light upon the speakers. Too often Mrs. Stone fails here. And in addition, too often the dialogue seems stilted, unreal.

Between retrospects and exposés we get the story, sandwiched in with broken continuity. It's a dull tale, significant only as an example of the devastating effect which middle-class morals can have on human actions. Nothing happens in the book except that Leda marries a man younger than herself, whom her daughter is in love with. The last chapter rounds off the architecture of the novel; for the set is the same as that of the first chapter —another birthday dinner on the tenth of July: the three sisters and Marise, waited on by the same old colored butler. Leda, just back from her wedding trip, is the pivot of the emotional tension. After dinner, she has a heart attack and dies on the sofa.

If Mrs. Stone has not been altogether successful in carrying out her idea in writing, the reason must be attributed far more to the difficulty of the task she has imposed upon herself than to any literary incompetence. Though the story itself is dull and though it may at times seem to be unraveling clumsily, the idea behind it is extremely interesting—especially to those who happen to be interested in novel technique. Her theme, in a nutshell, is the interplay of reactions between three sisters who, when they are no longer young become reunited, after each has developed through her particular past experiences an individuality and a set of tastes distinctly different from the others'. The interest lies in the portrayal of human tension resulting from character rather than from action. For the purpose she had in mind, Mrs. Stone was obliged to tell her story (and she does it with a great degree of success) in the way a bud unfolds rather than in the way a stem grows. The chronological method is all right for straightforward narrative, like Defoe's; but it is no good for stories which do not begin at the beginning and end at the end—for stories like Conrad's "Nostromo," for instance, or Henry James's "The Golden Bowl." "The Almond Tree" is a psychological study which starts when the three sisters are reunited after their long separation. In order to get the story on from this point, the novelist naturally has to go back in time for the sake of explaining the reasons for the tension which is to follow. It is a difficult task, and Mrs. Stone has done it not with felicitous brilliance but with a very decent competence. The shortcoming of the book is merely that it seems stiff, as if the author were too conscious of the difficulty of her task and not sufficiently at her ease to do it with great facility. Incidentally, "The Almond Tree" is the November choice of The Book League of America.

WOODCUT, BY OLIVER WARD HUNT, FROM "MODERN BOOK ILLUSTRATION" (RUDGE).

Portrait of America

TIME EXPOSURE. By PARKHURST WHITNEY. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by ROBERT CANTWELL

CHANGING manners, and the changing ideology of the American middle class, make up the bulk of Mr. Whitney's amusing evocation of the past three decades. The alterations in belief he records (with the noteworthy exception of the changing attitude toward sex) are usually presented by their more obvious results—the growth of advertising, the growth of the automobile industry, the rise of the middle class to affluence. The story begins with the marriage of Fannie Troup to a young photographer, and proceeds, with a wealth of detailed description, to their eventual success in the years after the war. Poverty disturbs them, at first, and the antagonism of Fannie's mother, and later on there is a complication in Fannie's resistance to her husband's ardent advances —a resistance that causes his infidelity. But the conflicts are unimportant, one feels, or at most merely excuses for bringing in additional information on the times. It is the enormous fund of scrapbook, picture-album history, the forgotten slang, the lost fads, that stimulates Mr. Whitney's imagination, and it must be said at once that he writes this history with humor and with a photographic accuracy.

Sex is represented in the changing ideology by Fannie's discarding of the ideals of her parents, and by the change in the attitude toward divorce. The three decades witnessed the growth of religious indifference, making an additional alteration in the lives of Chester and Fannie, and the increasingly compulsive force of advertising that created new needs and turned luxuries into necessities. All this accompanies Chester's rapid rise in business, and the period of expansion is also marked with the growth of doubt and hesitancy. Fannie's education, for example, is based on simple maxims of right and wrong, but it is clearly brought out that she approaches the problem of the education of her own children in a spirit of inquiry; that she observes them, rather than attempts to force a code of morals upon them. The war enters the story, partly as another financial opportunity, and partly as a psychological disturbance. The false armistice of November 7th is described at length, an ironic symbol on a tremendous scale, and Mr. Whitney writes of the hysterical celebration with the interest and detachment of a scientist observing the antics of some primitive tribe.

The great achievement of "Time Exposure" is the work of clarification it performs in dramatizing the shifting impulses behind American social movements. And dramatizing these impulses gives them a reality that is too often lacking in the generalizations of economists and sociologists. Inevitably, "Time Exposure" suggests the work of Sinclair Lewis, but Mr. Whitney's aims are different, although both writers employ the same methods. He is less satirist than explorer, and he analyzes social movements, not to criticize them, but to present their importance in the daily life of the individual. Occasionally the details of his novel fight with the characters for significance, and in many cases one feels that Chester and Fannie act as they do because the action serves to bring out some picturesque aspect of the America of the past generation. When they visit the Pan-American Exposition on their honeymoon, for example, the visit is not a dramatic episode in their lives (and a singularly tense one, it would seem, for the one genuine conflict of the novel is the result of Fannie's inability to surrender herself to her husband), but an elaborate and engaging description of such forgotten glories as the House Upside Down, the exposition buildings, the fashions of the time. Even the assassination of McKinley, which occurs during their visit, is presented as a picturesque detail, without social significance. But these evasions are dwarfed by the data on American customs Mr. Whitney has succeeded in dramatizing in a timely and entertaining novel.

The Memorial Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon is nearly finished and, unless something unforeseen happens, it will be opened on Shakespeare's birthday, April 23, 1932. The inaugural play has not yet been chosen.

The Soldier Mind

THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE. By STEPHEN CRANE. New York: Random House. 1931. $15.

AN edition limited to 900 numbered copies, printed by the Grabhorn Press and illustrated with capitals in red, with military figures in black, by Valenti Angelo. A broad page, a dignified black-face type, and excellent illustrations make an edition indicative of its classic content. For "The Red Badge" is classic. The subjective study of war, what might be called the soldier's mind at war, which swelled into a whole literature after 1914, is only a full development of the theme sounded by a journalist in this extraordinarily prophetic book. "Maggie" and many another of his stories, once famous for ruthless realism, seem a little tawdry now, but "The Red Badge of Courage" holds its high place in American literature, perhaps because, in spite of its honest realism, it is at heart romance, and in accord, not at clash, with the deepest instincts of the period when it was composed.

A Stilted Tale

UNDER THE BRUTCHSTONE. By J. M. DENWOOD and S. FOWLER WRIGHT. New York: Coward-McCann. 1931. $2.50.

THE publishers inform us on the jacket of this book that its author followed for many years the calling of a poacher among the hills of the border country—an occupation not unlike, in social standing, that of minor bootlegging in this country—and that in consequence of the rigors of that trade he is badly broken in health. He appears to have gathered a respectable education at some point of his career. On internal evidence one might guess that not a little of it came from a perusal of the books of Sir Walter Scott during those periods of leisure that come at times to to put his view of life into a novel. "Under the Brutchstone" is a long, involved, and stilted tale somewhat unskilfully constructed on early nineteenth century lines. It is the story of Red Ike and his friend Will Moffatt, two heroic young men who gain their living by the illicit snaring of game and fish at night on the preserved estates of their more wealthy neighbors. Red Ike, after an initial disillusionment at the hands of the wanton Peg, becomes the lover of Jael, the beauteous gypsy. Will's tender sentiments are directed to, and reciprocated by, Jean, daughter of the *parvenu* land owner, John Lynd. Now, this Lynd is a fiend in human form. The extent and perseverance of his malignity are equalled only by its frustration as, through 300-odd pages, he and his corps of associate villains pursue Ike and Will with shot and club, with knife and rock, with leaps in the dark, with unjust accusations and with many another time-tried device of the dastard.

The book resounds with the creaking of plot and counter-plot. Jael, and not Jean, is the rightfully legitimate daughter of Lynd, and there are letters to prove that point which appear, disappear, and reappear like a conjuror's deck of cards. There are secret passages, caves (furnished by Red Ike with literature and littered with MS. poems), graves at full moon, elaborate gypsy staffs, and much other machinery of romance. And from that machinery, ever and anon there leaps a god or goddess to save our heroes just in time from death by assault or hemp.

None of the characters is more than a puppet, with the exceptions of Red Ike, Jael, and the disreputable Peg, and even these are hardly realized. The style is stilted and unnatural, save for that in the opening chapters, where one detects the artful hand of Mr. Wright sprinkling Anglo-Saxonisms as thick as millet on a field. Nevertheless, the tale, for all its awkwardness, moves with an undeniable pace. Its naïvely involved incident runs with the untutored swiftness of a mountain runner.

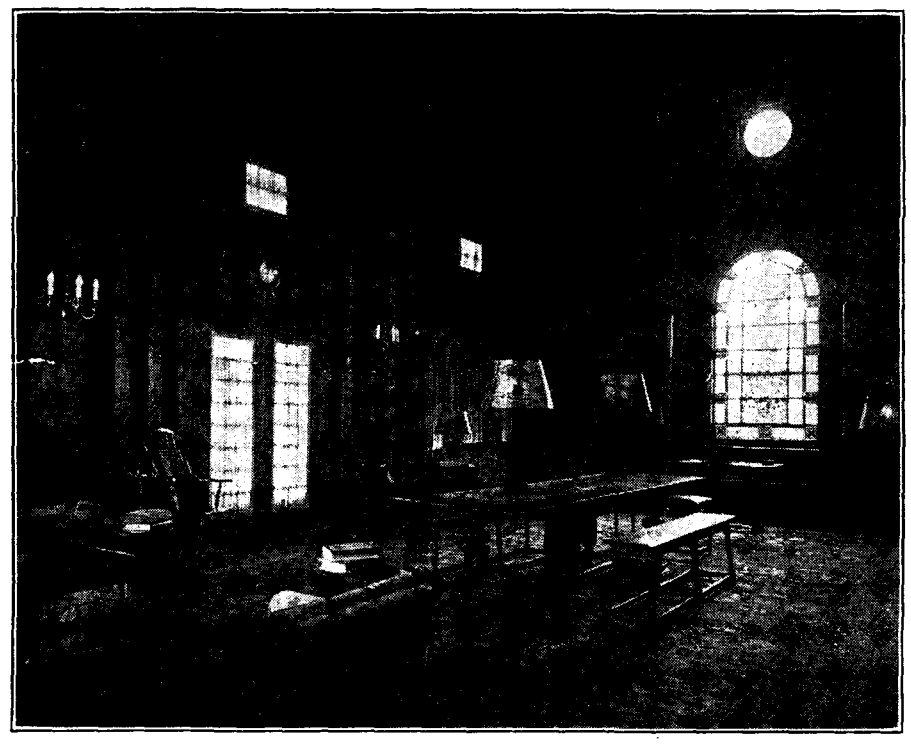
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Bowling Green

A List

WE hope that this will be the last Reading List we shall ever have to compile. But we promised some time ago to try to name the writers in English who had given us the greatest pleasure in twenty years of mature reading. It is subject to the qualifications of all such lists. It is a confession, not a recommendation. It does not suggest that these are "best" or most important; simply that they have given the most pleasure to ourself. The list is set down in merely casual order. Undoubtedly there are many omissions of sheer forgetfulness.

Chaucer: Troilus and Cressida
Shakespeare: ad lib
A. Conan Doyle: Complete Sherlock Holmes
Swift: Gulliver's Travels; Journal to Stella
Thackeray: The English Humorists
John Morley: Voltaire
O. Henry: ad lib.
Joseph Conrad: The Shadow Line; A Personal Record; The Nigger of the Narcissus; Twixt Land and Sea
Boswell: Life of Johnson
Robert Bridges: The Spirit of Man (an anthology)
W. H. Hudson: The Purple Land
Samuel Butler: The Way of All Flesh; Notebooks
Melville: Moby Dick
C. E. Montague: Disenchantment
Keats: Poems; Letters
William Blake: Poems
John Donne: Poems, Devotions, Letters
Thomas Fuller: The Holy State and the Profane State
R. L. Stevenson: ad lib.
Thomas Hardy: Poems
Bacon: Essays
Lamb: Essays of Elia; Letters
Santayana: Little Essays; Character and Opinion in the U. S.
Vachel Lindsay: Poems
Virginia Woolf: The Common Reader
John Masefield: Poems
Havelock Ellis: The Dance of Life
Sir William Osler: The Student Life
Elinor Wylie: Poems; The Venetian Glass Nephew
William Rose Benét: Man Possessed
Siegfried Sassoon: Memoirs of an Infantry Officer
Sterne: Sentimental Journey; Tristram Shandy
Fielding: Tom Jones
F. C. Burnand: Happy Thoughts
Hawthorne: The Scarlet Letter
Landor: Selections (Golden Treasury Series)
Katherine Mansfield: Bliss
Anatole France: Penguin Island; The Revolt of the Angels
The Oxford Book of English Verse
The Book of Common Prayer
Benjamin Franklin: Autobiography
Thoreau: Walden
William Penn: Some Fruits of Solitude
A. Edward Newton: The Amenities of Book Collecting
Du Maurier: Peter Ibbetson; Trilby
Stories by Saki (one volume edition)
Kipling: The Jungle Book; Traffics and Discoveries
Aldous Huxley: Leda
William McFee: Casuals of the Sea
Felix Riesenberg: Endless River
Rupert Brooke: Poems
Edna St. Vincent Millay; Poems
John Aubrey: Brief Lives
H. M. Tomlinson: The Sea and the Jungle; Old Junk; Out of Soundings
Pepys: Diary
Walt Whitman: Leaves of Grass; Complete Prose
De Quincey: The Opium Eater; The English Mail Coach; Reminiscences of the English Lake Poets
Hazlitt: ad lib.
Walter Pater: Marius the Epicurean
George Moore: Confessions of a Young Man
Van Wyck Brooks: The Ordeal of Mark Twain
The Heart of Emerson's Journals, edited by Bliss Perry
Complete Catalogue of the Oxford University Press
Robert Cortes Holliday: Walking Stick Papers; Broome Street Straws
Coleridge: Biographia Literaria
Wordsworth: Poems
Wilkie Collins: The Moonstone; The Woman in White
Emily Brontë: Wuthering Heights
George Borrow: Lavengro
George Gissing: The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft
Alexander Smith: Dreamthorp
L. Pearsall Smith: Trivia
Emily Dickinson: Poems
Edward Fitzgerald: Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam; Euphranor
Hilaire Belloc: Hills and the Sea



FISHING BOX OF DR. A. S. W. ROSENBACH AT STRATHMERE, N. J.

E. V. Lucas: The Open Road (an anthology)
Matthew Arnold: Poems; Culture and Anarchy
Jane Austen: Persuasion
Sherwood Anderson: Winesburg, Ohio
David W. Bone: The Brassbounder
Don Marquis: The Almost Perfect State
Max Beerbohm: Seven Men; And Even Now
W. Compton Leith: Sirenica
Walter de la Mare: Poems; Desert Islands
Sir Thomas Browne: Religio Medici

⁂ ⁂

The select poems of John Clare are a compliment in themselves to the discernment of the friend to whom you give them. The interest in Clare is in the ascendent, and he is coming slowly out of an undeserved oblivion. In another year Clare will be as much talked of as John Donne.—A prophecy by the Oxford University Press.

⁂ ⁂

"Readers will notice with some dismay," remarks the famous Rosenbach Company in its "Catalogue of an Exhibition of 200 Famous First Editions" (now on view at 15 East 51st Street, New York) "that we have not included Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary*. We have done this merely to pique that great Johnsonian, Mr. A. Edward Newton, to a further defence of its high merit, morally, æsthetically and socially. We have included in its stead the first edition of the irresistible and more influential *Baron Munchausen's Travels*."

The Rosenbach annotation of this item is worth quoting as perhaps the first instance of a new description of extreme rarity:

> MUNCHAUSEN, BARON
> Narrative of his Marvelous Travels
> Oxford, 1786
> 12 mo. Calf.
> FIRST EDITION—and Damn Rare!

⁂ ⁂

Before the meteor-like rise of Schnitzler to fame in the last quarter of the 19th century, Austrian literature was ruled by the spirit of Grillparzer, the typical Austrian writer.
—M. W. Fodor in the N. Y. *Evening Post*.

⁂ ⁂

A good bookstore is as important to the health of any community as a good school, church or hospital. Help us to serve the community at large, so that in time every town in a radius of 50 miles from Albany can be promptly and intelligently supplied with the books required.
—circular of R. F. Clapp, Inc., very alert book store at 52 North Pearl Street, Albany, N. Y.

⁂ ⁂

Great books are born of a passionate sincerity. They are the emotional confessions, whatever their literary form, of those who think, feel and suffer. A great book is really a human soul articulate. It may be so at odds with the hour in which it is born, that its message seems doomed by the scorn of those for whom it is written.
—Catalogue of "desirable Books," Alfred F. Goldsmith, 42 Lexington Ave., New York City.

⁂ ⁂

Words get lichen-grown and crumble like stones in an old wall, but it does not do to build a new wall with old stones to make it look like an old one. Let the new work age if it will and gather picturesqueness in its own good time.
—Unpublished Extracts from the Notebooks of Samuel Butler (*Life and Letters*, London, October, 1931).

⁂ ⁂

When in doubt do as nearly nothing as you can. —Ibid.

⁂ ⁂

We like those who know much about the same as we do, or much more, or much less; but we do not like them to know a little more or a little less. Jones says the same holds good with money.
——Ibid.

⁂ ⁂

There has been some discussion lately of the always difficult problem of Translation. For nearly a year I've been meaning to congratulate Professor Arpad Steiner of Hunter College on his notably interesting paper on "Sinclair Lewis in German," which appeared in *Language Monographs*, December, 1930. Admitting that Lewis, owing to his racy use of American argot, is unusually difficult to translate, he protests with justice at the garbled form in which Lewis's books have passed into German.

"It is of no mean interest," he remarks, "to see how well a severe critic of American life is understood in Germany, and to inquire whether this censor of the American microcosm, whose very success is a paramount tribute to the fair-mindedness of the American people, is rightly interpreted. The translators often misunderstand even plain English, and are utterly ignorant of American speech, American private and public life."

For the amusement of those who understand a little German I quote briefly from Professor Steiner: "American politics, including Prohibition, caused some embarrassment to the translators. Concerning Prohibition, their imagination ran away with them a few times, and they might be charged with the deliberate intention of distorting actual conditions if the lapses were not to be attributed to mere ignorance: The well-known mineral water 'White Rock' is rendered by 'whisky'; 'we certainly did have one large round time that evening'—'auf jeden Fall haben wir an dem Abend allerhand in uns hineingeschüttet'; innocent 'ginger-ale' becomes simply 'Bier'; and to our dismay we learn that 'she was a good mixer' means 'sie verstand es Schnäpse zu mischen.' Translations like "Kongressmann, Distrikt' probably mean little to the average German reader; the same method of translating produced a nonsense in rendering 'dairymen's union' with 'die Meiereiunion' and did not prevent 'he kept his dairy open-shop' from appearing in a ludicrous disguise as 'er hatte seinen Milchladen offengehalten'; 'to nominate' is not 'wählen,' 'Italians with perfectly good votes' does not mean 'Italiener, die sich bei den Wahlen tadellos benehmen'.

"Words concerning American food and cooking have been translated rather unpalatably a number of times, and this paragraph could not be started more appropriately than by citing a classic example: 'Comfort - station'—'Imbissstube'; a few more samples of this category: 'mince-pie'—'Fleischpastete'; 'sinkers'—'alte Semmeln'; 'chop-suey'—'Haifischflossen'; 'chicken croquettes'—'Hühnerragout'; 'a bar of fudge'—'eine Tafel Schokolade'; 'some wienies'—''n paar ganz kleine . . . '; 'the gaily bedecked peacock pie'—'der fröhlich geschmückte Pfau'.

"American church-life offered some hard nuts which could not be cracked by mere guessing. Hence the surprising information that 'a lecturer went out campaigning' means 'er zog aufs Schlachtfeld'; consequently 'the Sunday School campaign' is called 'der Feldzug für die Sonntagsschule'; a clergyman who is a 'wizard soul-winner' is portrayed as 'ein Zauberer und Seelenfänger'; 'Sunday School fans'—'Sonntagsschulreklame'; 'Getting Prospects to Sign up with the Sunday School'—'Wie man Spekulanten zur Sonntagsschule bringt'; 'the elevation of domestic service'—'Hebung des häuslichen Gottesdienstes'; 'field-lecturer'—'sie hat im Felde Vorträge gehalten'; 'parlors of a church'—'Sakristei'; 'Episcopalian rector'—'Kirchenvorsteher'; 'semi-Christian Science'—'eine halbchristliche Lehre'.

"One of the best boners is the translation of 'care-ridden years' as 'automobilbefahrene Jahre.' 'The way him and his lady secretary carry on' 'wie er und seine Frau sich in aller Heimlichkeit aufführen', 'the Dream Days of now'—'die Tagträume von jetzt', 'I can't exactly remember at this late date'—'ich weiss nicht mehr genau, es war schon sehr spät'; 'highway markers' (at forty miles' distance from a city)—'Strassentafeln'; 'surface cars'—'Omnibusse'; 'the second smoker of the 8.16'—'im Raucherwagen der Untergrundbahn'."

It would be delicious if one could only imagine what impression of American life the German reader may derive from these translations.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What Is the Answer?

By GEORGE S. OPPENHEIMER of The Viking Press

THE American book publishing business is facing a severe crisis. This statement in itself is neither surprising nor startling when one takes into consideration the similar state of scores of other industries. The answer that rises far too spontaneously on every tongue is "It's the depression. We're all in the same boat." It would be comforting to think so but unfortunately the entire blame cannot be laid at the door of the current slump in business. Even before the panic of 1929 the whole system of book distribution was already creaking. The book business did not seem to be developing as soundly and as safely as its age and acquired wisdom warranted. Undoubtedly the depression has contributed to the general shaky state of affairs in the book business today, but previous experience has shown that in times of general industrial distress books did not seem to suffer as acutely as other products. During those times people, deprived of more expensive pleasures, stayed home and read books. Those days have passed and we must look far beyond the present unsettled conditions to discover what is wrong.

Only one person holds the key to the secret or secrets of the current problems of the book business: the Book Purchaser —at least the purchaser of the new and full-priced book, not the one who turns to the dollar and other cheaply priced reprints. It is he who supports the business and must continue to do so in the style that it is accustomed to, if the industry is to flourish and grow. It remains for the publisher, therefore, to discover wherein the book business can remain attractive, faithful, and approachable for this Book Purchaser.

You as an individual may still be buying as many books as ever before. If so this article is not addressed primarily to you, although you too can be of aid in the solution of the problem. It is to the group of individuals who no longer feel the inclination or impulse to spend as much money as formerly on books that we must look for the answers to our questions. Both groups, however, are vitally concerned in the answers. Unless the book business continues to be supported, it must undergo a complete and revolutionary change. Many bookstores will disappear and are already disappearing. Many worthwhile authors, finding it even more difficult now to earn a decent income from their books, will concentrate on writing for the magazines, the movies, etc. The whole system of distribution of books will be transmuted—into what no one knows or can foretell. At all events it is reasonably certain that should this situation come about, books will no longer be as easily available as heretofore.

This article or rather this questionnaire definitely aims to enlist your aid. If you are among those who are buying fewer books, we would like to know why. Even if you are still keeping up to your former budget of expenditures and yet have ideas on the subject, we shall welcome your answers and comments. We naturally have our own thoughts on the matter and have attempted in this questionnaire to list every conceivable one of these surmises.

We hope that each of you who reads this will take the trouble to answer the questions. The information garnered from your answers is certain to be of enormous assistance in determining how best to proceed in safeguarding your interests and ours in the maintenance of books as a national institution and as a profitable industry. The surmises are listed with brief expansion so that there may be no cause for misunderstanding and at the end you will find the questionnaire.

1. The Radio and the Movies. With the advent of the radio, Americans have become transformed into a listening race; the talking movies have saved them even from having to read captions. There is little doubt but that these two forms of entertainment, with their economic availability to almost any purse, have proved to be serious contestants for your affection. Many a family has substituted the former for a night of reading; and the latter, with the advent of sound, has certainly won over many new and literate enthusiasts.

2. The Magazine. For years publishers of books have looked upon the magazine as the arch enemy. To it is attributed the failure of volumes of short stories, the lack of wider distribution of books, and other sins. The enormous consumption of magazines in this country must effect an equally enormous cut-in on the time for reading of the average American. Is this true in your case?

3. Too many books being published. This situation probably effects the bookseller more directly than it does the book consumer. However, it reaches you eventually. With the great flood of books pouring from the presses, readers are being more and more deluged. It is becoming increasingly difficult for you to pick and choose, and as a result are you inclined to read less on account of the very difficulty of getting what you want?

4. The quality of books. Has the quality of books fallen off within the past few years?

5. The moral tone. Have the increasing frankness of writers and the general letdown in the moral standards of literature frightened you away? Are you afraid to buy for yourself or to give away modern books for fear that you or the recipient may be offended, shocked, corrupted, or unduly titillated?

6. The price of books. Are books too expensive? Think well before concluding that this and this alone is your reason for buying fewer books. If the price of books could be lowered, it certainly would be done now. Other products are being reduced. Publishers cannot afford to lower prices. Is the price of books keeping you from buying as generously as you used to?

7. The Matter of Price-Consciousness. Apart from the material price of books comes the subject of mental price-consciousness. Several elements have helped to emphasize the high price of books on your mind. First comes the popular reprint, which we will go into more fully in the next paragraph. The advertising which these distributors have done ("Once $2.50 or $5.00, now $1.00') has undoubtedly created a feeling in the customer's mind that if books can be so materially reduced in price, they must have been too highly priced originally. Secondly, cut-rate departments and bookstores have laid great emphasis on price saving. Under this heading too are the shops, many of them in drugstores, scattered throughout the larger metropolitan areas, devoted to the sale of publishers' remainders (books on which the publisher has an overstock and which he sells to remainder houses at a sacrifice). Third are the Book Clubs and their advertising also emphasizes price saving. One other factor contributed to this price consciousness, but has now practically disappeared: the unsuccessful experiment of the new dollar book. Last year several publishers decided that new books could be brought out at a one dollar price and that the resulting wide distribution would entail large profits. The experiment was a failure, but the advertising and wide publicity which accompanied the scheme focussed enormous attention on the price of books. Have any or all of these elements made you wary of publishers' prices and as a result loath to buy as generously as you used to?

8. The cheap reprint. From drugstore windows, from department store and bookstore counters imposing volumes priced at one dollar or less stare at you and invite you to buy. These are the popular reprints—Star Dollar Books, The Modern Library, Blue Ribbon Books, Grosset and Dunlap Novels of Distinction, A. L. Burt seventy-five cent reprints—reissues of books which in their original editions ranged in price from $2 to $5 and occasionally even a trifle higher. These books are usually published not less than two years after the first and higher priced publication. It is a known fact that many book purchasers wait for these reprints in order to effect the saving between the original price and the reprint price. Is this so in your case? Are you stinting on purchase of new books and concentrating on buying reprints?

9. Rental Libraries. With the growth of the rental library system books have become more than ever accessible. On the one hand this is a boon to the publisher. More people read his books, talk about them and stimulate further purchases. On the other hand this system does away to a great extent with the actual purchasing of new books. Books are rented out, not bought. If this practice were to become universal, it would do away completely with the building of libraries in your homes. Whether or not the rental library helps or hurts the book business has not yet been proved. Public libraries, too, come under this general heading. Has the library served you so well that you no longer purchase as many books, but rent them instead?

10. Shelf Space in Your Home. Undoubtedly one of the problems of owning books is where to put them. It is a constant source of amazement to book owners how fast the shelves overflow. Some day some genius will evolve a painless method for exchanging old books for new. Until then, however, narrow shelves restrict sales. Are you shelf bound in your purchases?

11. The Book Clubs. One of the greatest battles ever waged between bookstore and publisher was brought about by the birth of the book clubs. The bookstore claimed that the clubs would definitely hurt the sales of books. The clubs claimed they would stimulate word-of-mouth advertising and thereby help retail sales through publicity. This battle has now abated. Nevertheless, there still exists the possibility that membership in one or more book clubs may be discouraging customers from entering bookstores with the result that they are buying fewer books. Another accusation levelled against the Book Club is that it concentrates too great attention on one specific title each month and that as a result other books suffer. Are you concentrating on Book Club selections and letting other titles go by the board?

12. Lack of efficient promotion. Advertising men outside of the publishing business are constantly telling publishers that they do not advertise sufficiently or effectively. Do you find that advertising fails to whet your appetite for books? Do you also find or rather fail to find sufficient advertising to keep you apprized of what is being published? Under this heading too should come the question of overstatement in book advertising. Have you lost confidence in publishers' announcements and ceased to listen to their sales talks? Have you even found in some instances that the advertising seemed dishonest in its appeal?

13. The Bookstore. It seems paradoxical to list the bookstore as one of the reasons why you may be buying fewer books, but there are good reasons for doing so. Is your bookstore as well stocked as it used to be? Is it serving you properly? Is it encouraging you to come in and buy as many books as hitherto? If a "no" is the answer to any of these questions, then the bookstore deserves part of the blame for the current depression. Then, too, there must be many of you located in towns where there are no bookstores, or in parts of towns located at an inconvenient distance from a bookstore. Would you buy more books if a bookstore were located conveniently near you? Do you think there should be more bookstores?

14. Book Reviews. Is the book review serving its purpose, namely, to stimulate reading, or is it proving an adequate substitute for the necessity of reading the books themselves? In other words, are you getting so much information from a review of a book that you no longer feel the inclination or the need of reading that particular book? Are reviews of books too uniformly enthusiastic so that you lose all faith in the opinions expressed? Or lastly, are reviews so lukewarm and so dull that they fail to stimulate any appetite whatsoever?

This concludes the list. We sincerely hope that you will give some serious consideration to each question. We have left room on the questionnaire for any additional remarks and welcome any additional comments. An article based on the findings from your answers will be prepared shortly. Please mail all questionnaires to *The Saturday Review*. If you prefer to omit your name you may do so.

after each question)

a. Are you buying as many books as ever?.....

b. Are you buying fewer books *only* because you cannot afford to buy more?.....

1. Are the radio and the movies distracting you from books?.....
2. Is the magazine usurping much of your reading time?.....
3. Is it becoming increasingly difficult for you to select your books because of too many books being published?.....
4. Are you buying fewer books because you feel that the quality of what you buy has fallen off recently?.....
5. Are you buying fewer books because you feel that the moral tone of literature has been lowered?.....
6. Is the price of books keeping you from buying as generously as you used to?.....
7. Have you become price-conscious and as a result more wary of buying? .....
8. Has the popular reprint cut in on your purchases of new books?.....
9. Has the library, rental or public, made you more of a book-borrower than a book buyer?.....
10. Are you shelf-bound in your purchases?.....
11. *A.* Is membership in book clubs limiting your book purchases?.....
    B. Are you concentrating on book club choices and letting other titles go? .....
12. Do you find that publisher's advertising:
    A. fails to whet your appetite for the books advertised?.....
    B. is not sufficiently far-reaching to make an impression on you? .....
    C. is too full of overstatements to continue to enlist your faith?.....
    D. is dishonest in its appeal?.....
13. *A.* Is the bookstore failing to serve you properly?.....
    B. Would you buy more books if a bookstore were more accessible? .....
    C. Do you feel the need of more bookstores?.....
14. *A.* Is the book review serving as a substitute for the books themselves? .....
    B. Are reviews of books too uniformly enthusiastic?.....
    C. Are reviews so dull that they fail to stimulate you into buying? .....

(On the back of this coupon you will find space for additional remarks)

Please mail as soon as possible to:

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE
25 West 45th Street, New York City

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Some Recent Biography

A Portrait Gallery

INDISCRETIONS. By FRANCES, COUNTESS OF WARWICK. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1931. $3.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES MCD. PUCKETTE

IN few places do these rambling recollections verge upon indiscretions. They are composed almost wholly of anecdotes and observations of people in high places. Few of the subjects of the stories get any nasty knocks. As a girl of seventeen the author was chosen by Queen Victoria and Disraeli to be the wife of Prince Leopold; the honor was declined because her mother thought she would be "dreadfully miserable in the formality of the court." Today the Countess is a member of the Labor Party; it might be imagined that her changed point of view would cause her to unloose some shafts (or in the language of labor, shy some rocks) in the direction of royalty and nobility. But she is loyal. Her observations are fair and dispassionate, and not seldom humorous. They cover so great a range of personalities as to include Queen Victoria and Elinor Glyn.

Disraeli once took her, a mere girl, to the theatre "for the sole purpose of analyzing me and discovering what manner of girl I was" in the interest of matchmaking for Prince Leopold. She recalls not a word of what Dizzy said, but remembers that she wore a white dress and blue sash—a human touch. The Countess was later a member of the "Marlborough house set" of Edward VII when he was Prince of Wales, which was "extinguished by the Prince's accession to the throne." She recalls that a year after the King had been on the throne "I received a visit from Lord Esher one morning. He told me with charming courtesy and frankness that he thought it would be well for all concerned if my close connection with great affairs were to cease." King Edward's "habit of telling me things" was causing comment which distressed the Queen.

A number of Americans appear in these pages—Col. House, William Waldorf Astor, Henry James, Joseph H. Choate. The Countess writes that she has discovered Shaw's secret sorrow—it is that while he "loves to think of himself as resembling Mephistopheles, he has grown so benign looking that he appears more like Father Christmas."

Among the indiscretions are the Countess's mention of some great houses which supplied "perfectly poisonous food"; her comments upon the prison-like aspect of many country homes, and upon the sale of peerages. A considerable number of anecdotes of well-known persons are excellent and enlightening. Her judgments upon great men are generally shrewd and fair. The reminiscences have little continuity but are none the less readable for that. They provide an interesting picture of a transition period in British life, of which transition the Countess is an outstanding example.

Woodrow Wilson

(*Continued from page* 390)

pleted, Congress passed an act by which American coastwise vessels were allowed free passage. Immediately the British government brought forth the Hay-Paunceforte treaty, concerning the Isthmus, containing a clause that all nations should use the canal "on terms of entire equality, so there shall be no discrimination." American money had built the canal. Why should other countries enjoy equality? The only answer was the solemn pledge of equality in the treaty. Wilson refused to let his policy be known until the tariff and currency measures were out of the way. Then one day, in a very brief message, he asked Congress to repeal the tolls provision allowing American coastwise vessels free entrance. There was heated opposition. It was said we were "bowing down to the demands of Downing Street." The administration forces were mobilized, Bryan bringing up his heavy artillery. The President won by a vote of 247 to 162 in the House. The fight was harder in the Senate but success was achieved there. It was the greatest tribute to faith in the President of any of his other victories. The opponents of the repeal of the Panama Canal tolls exemption raised the cry that there had been a "deal" with Great Britain. A sentence in Wilson's address was seized upon as justifying their charge. He had said: "I shall not know how to deal with other matters of even greater delicacy and nearer consequences if you do not grant it to me in ungrudging measure." What did that cryptic sentence mean? It was construed to be that, though no formal bargain had been made, "there is little doubt that the Mexican problem, then the outstanding foreign complication of both governments—though there was no formal bargain—must have been in the minds of both parties concerned." Prior to the tolls repeal, the British government had recognized Huerta and its representative in Mexico, Ambassador Sir Lionel Carden, "seemed to be doing his utmost to defeat the aims of the United States." Wilson firmly believed that British financial interests were chiefly responsible for his difficulties in Mexico. The Cowdray oil interests had large concessions in Mexico and the oil concessionaries in Britain and America were generally lined up with Huerta. Many believed they backed the party or parties which made the troubles that baffled Wilson for many months of "watchful waiting."

Mr. Baker devotes 116 pages to "The Mexican Crisis." He shows that Wilson heard all sides as to the problem he found on his door step when he entered the White House. He sent William Bayard Hale and John Lind to obtain first-hand information. He only refused to recognize Huerta when convinced his hands were bloody with the murder of Madero and that he had obtained and held office at the point of the bayonet. He believed that Huerta's rule was inimical to the best interest of Mexicans. Finally Wilson acted upon the principle set forth by Jefferson with reference to the French Revolution: "It accords with our principles to acknowledge any government to be rightful which is formed by the will of the nation substantially declared." The tangled threads of the Mexican policy needed to be unravelled. Mr. Baker has given what amounts to a book to the elucidation of the shifting scenes and most difficult, at times, seemingly impossible, handling of a situation that would not stay put. His analysis of Huerta, Carranza, and Villa, along with the backing and filling of those claiming to speak for the distraught Mexicans, is an informing and authoritative piece of history. Mr. Baker no more attempts to defend every step taken than would Wilson, who was forced to change his course by the shifting scenes. But he shows that from the first to the last step, amid all the vituperation at home and misunderstanding abroad, Wilson's single track mind was governed by the one steadfast purpose, as he stated, "I am more interested in the fortunes of oppressed men and pitiful women and children than in any property rights whatever." It was his zeal for these forgotten men in Mexico that dominated all his thinking and acting in all he did about Mexico.

Whatever may be said of Wilson's policy of "watchful waiting" in Mexico and the mistakes inherent in such a policy, these things stand out as justifying the course pursued: 1. When we entered the World War, and every resource was needed to prosecute it, there was no fear of the back-fire from Mexico which a different policy would have invited; 2. Wilson won his chief purpose, the ousting of a usurper who owed his position to the assassination of the elected president; 3. He made possible the friendly relations which later subsisted between the two countries and set at rest the Mexican fear that Uncle Sam had avid eyes turned toward their country. The fulness and fairness of Mr. Baker's detail of the Mexican crisis is the best justification of the course, often tortuous, pursued by the Wilson administration in the most difficult and delicate situation of a century. It would have been a tragedy if Wilson had listened to the clamor and sent soldiers to conquer Mexico as the step "to annex everything to the Panama Canal."

Mr. Baker also shows how Wilson sought in Nicaragua, Santo Domingo, and in the Caribbean area, full of quicksands, to serve the weal of the eighty per-cent who had never had a "look in" and how troublous the waters were.

In the chapter on "Trusts and Labor Unions" there is depicted the deep-seated determination to uproot monopoly, with Wilson's desire to free labor unions and farm organizations from prosecution. He said "You cannot weigh a human soul on the same scales on which you weigh a piece of pork." He won the fight and set up the Trade Commission in order to carry out this aim: "It is our purpose to destroy monopoly and maintain competition as the only effectual instrument of business liberty."

The best chapter of Baker's two volumes is the one entitled "Wilson, Idealist and Reformer," the text of which is Wilson's words: "The way to success in this great country with its fair judgments is to show that you are not afraid of anybody except God and His final verdict." In his appraisement of Wilson, the author shows an insight into the inner life and light which made Wilson the most idealistic of practical reformers. The fact is that of all the presidents, when it came to carrying out ideals and reforms, Mr. Wilson had no patience with any except practical men, who knew what they wanted and how to carry it out.

To sum up: Mr. Baker has caused the reader to see that in the days before the World War Wilson never lost a fight. He succeeded in securing a sound revolution in taxation, currency, anti-monopoly legislation, and put an end to Dollar Diplomacy. Errors of judgment were not wanting. Mr. Baker makes neither a superman nor an infallible one of Wilson. But he leaves the reader with this inevitable conclusion: Here strode a great mind that functioned efficiently for the common weal, guided by faith in the people, and controlled by profound devotion to equality and justice. You cannot read the volumes without a certainty that Wilson had come "to the kingdom for such a time as this."

Mr. Baker has shown discrimination and judgment in his selections out of barrels of documents and an abundance of data touching important events. The book is charming in style. It is as interesting as the best seller in fiction. The distinguished author has made facts of history and biography walk across the pages in a way to make the telling so delightful that, once you start in to reading, you do not wish to lay down the volumes until the last page is completed.

The Hon. Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy in the Wilson administration, speaks at first hand of the President during the years covered by Mr. Baker in these volumes.

Lord Crewe's book, Life of Lord Rosebery, says the London *Observer*, "rather confirms the impression that Lord Rosebery's greatest handicap was the silver spoon in his infant mouth. In no other case of a public man do we get so vivid an impression of good and bad fairies contending over a cradle, playing off gifts against one another in turn. The one gave ability, the other laziness—or at least disinclination;the one riches, the other frustration; the one sensibility, the other sensitiveness; the one ambition, the other fulfilment. There are few better types of tragedy than the life in which the qualities tend to cancel one another out."

This space is reserved for the use of those answering the questions on the preceding page.

Remarks:

You will be rendering a very valuable service to *The Saturday Review* if you will be good enough to answer the questions on the reverse side of this coupon and mail your replies to:

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE
25 West 45th Street, New York City

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Round About Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I HAVE previously reviewed former work of Elizabeth Hollister Frost in this column, and have, I think, previously commented on the fact that there are now three Frosts at least writing in this country, none, so far as I know, related to the other. Robert Frost is, of course, one of the greatest names in modern American poetry. Frances Frost is a newcomer of high potentiality. Elizabeth Hollister Frost, who came in view a little earlier than the latter, has produced *The Lost Lyrist* and *Hovering Shadow*. Now she gives us *The Closed Gentian* (Harpers). The title is taken from an actual incident, with its aftermath, movingly described in the dedication. Certain of the poems included have previously appeared in four different periodicals. The poems are brief. This verse is characteristic of them:

I leaned to pick a clematis
And open swung a door
Leading to a dimension
I had not seen before.

That, of course, suggests Emily Dickinson. "The Dance" and "The Bride Bereaved" suggest Hardy. It is apparent in what to me is probably the best poem in the book, "Circumference" (which recalls to one Genevieve Taggard's anthology of mystical poetry of the same title), that "Emily and Gerard, two whistling daggers," as well as Hardy himself are three of the great admirations of the author. Gerard is, of course, Gerard Manley Hopkins. But by the foregoing remarks I do not mean that Mrs. Frost's work is entirely derivative. That is not at all true. In fact she has a certain quirk of expression quite her own. The tenor of her poetry is search for something beyond the obstinacy of loss. In Part Two she becomes objective for a little, and gives us, among other portraits, one of "Aunt Harriet" which is strongly etched. She conveys sincere emotion in her personal songs. The "Innocent Song" is wholly delightful in its peculiarity, and her warning to youth a vivid cry. She can make beautiful and powerful pictures of intellectual matters:

The murmurous lovers sleep in peaceful amber
Of turning dawn; they need not think, but are.
But look! See Hafiz in the high boughs clamber,
Parrot of the eternal, for a star.

Revolving and revolving and revolving,
Dante and Goethe shake the retreating floor,
Besieging and exhorting, then dissolving
Against the ether's closed revolving door.

While her metaphysical speculation tries as yet a tentative wing, I should not be surprised if it were not in that direction that her greatest strength will come to her. But seldom has a mood of the childless been sung so hauntingly as in "The Bride Bereaved," already mentioned, subtitled "Island Cradle Song." There is a tendency elsewhere sometimes to prettify, sometimes to wax exclamatory with too great ease. But, generally speaking, this small volume is selective and has obviously undergone self-criticism.

K. N. Llewellyn is a new name to me. His *Put in His Thumb* is published by the Century Company. It is pleasingly dedicated "to all fine beasts." The author, in his preface, is apparently as fully aware of the defects of his poems as of their virtues. The work is apparently, according to him, the by-product of one earning his living at law practice. At the very beginning we find, in "Obiter still is Fancy's child," a sagacious reference to this:

Who hews too close must miss the mark;
truth too much true is dying truth.
Obiter glows in gathering dark,
colors the clouds of doom with youth.

There is a section of ballades—not very good ballades—dedicated to the law. There is an ingratiating section apparently written by a favorite maltese cat, the best of whose observations is the comment on the stupidity of human beings in always sleeping on top of a bed, and so on, instead of never knowing the "underneath" world of a cat. There are good poems on caged animals and an ironic longer poem called "Economic Incentive" which paints the futility of the present life of business devoid of any spiritual goal, the eyelessness of our present economic system. There is verse concerning the out-of-doors, there is apprehension of the atavistic. The author impresses one as an alive and likable person who refuses to be stifled by economic pressure or made a mere cog in a machine. Of his work he has already said himself that its defects seem to him beside the point, "And running beside the technical defects are at least two technical virtues: a sense for rhythm-value, and distaste for padding." This is true. It is not enough to make the volume poetry save here and there, and occasionally. As I say, a likeable person, a man of gusto, is apparent in the verse. But, though one group of verses is devoted to ponderings on words, true mastery of language is not often apparent. I shall quote "Veil," a short poem not indicative of the author's range, but one of his best in expression and content. It also reveals his technical faults:

Words shuttle silently and weave.
Names cover things, and men know names alone;
scatter a name, some pseudo-thing is sown—
over and under, over and under—Believe!

Words shuttle silently and weave a mind.
Unsown by name, wide worlds, aglow, impassioned.
While we are names our fathers' fathers fashioned—
woven of words, with words for eyes—and blind.

In *Quatrains for my Daughter*, by Elizabeth Morrow, of which Alfred A. Knopf has, with his usual good taste, made a beautiful book, the best poems are not the quatrains. They are the poems on "Atlas" and "Lot's Wife." Others, too, have life and color. This is a slight book, but it proves Mrs. Morrow a cultivated writer who is at times inclined to see the overlooked aspect of a situation, and that proves her a poet. Without remarkable accomplishment in general, she can achieve pictorial beauty. She is on the side of youth in its struggle with age. And she achieves to a certain extent precision of phrase .

The sonnets of Mary E. Bulkley in *Speaking at Seventy*, published by Gelber & Lilienthal, Inc., in San Francisco, constitute a phenomenon, in that the author celebrated her seventy-fifth birthday in November, and, prior to this sonnet sequence, had written no poetry. This would be of little moment if the sonnets were worthless, as they are not. They are sufficiently interesting to comment upon. The format and typography of the book are by the Grabhorn Press, the edition a limited one. There are only a dozen of these sonnets. This, the last, seems to us quite remarkable under the circumstances:

A pine-cone is a plummet which the tree
Points to the earth, wherein its strong roots lie,
A retrospect and pregnant prophecy
Of days to come, when boughs shall brush the sky.
From the cone's tip upcurled the spirals twine
And widen out in ever-gracious sweep
Of long, far-reaching yet returning line
To catch the great stars in an upward leap.
So, looking back to that primeval slime
Whence faint life sprang, I trace a widening curve
Up to that surge, whose lines in coming time
May reach to splendid planets, and not swerve
To break the lengthening line of life-to-be,
A line which gathers in Eternity.

CREATION of the Vachel Lindsay Testimonial fund was announced recently through the directors of the Abraham Lincoln association in Springfield, Ill., who will take charge of the fund and see to its appropriate disposal.

Contributions may be made to Paul M. Angle, secretary of the Abraham Lincoln Association, 701 First National Bank, Springfield, I
cepted, and t
not be disclos

The direct
former Governor Frank O. Lowden, Logan Hay, Pascal E. Hatch, A. D. Mackie, J. Paul Clayton, Henry M. Merriam, Alice E. Bunn, George W. Bunn, Jr., E. D. Keys, H. A. Converse, and R. C. Lanphier.

A statement issued by the directors is as follows:

"Since Vachel Lindsay's sudden death last Saturday a growing realization of the debt this community owes to him has been manifest. Of those who have lived in Springfield during the hundred and ten years of its life, only Abraham Lincoln is more widely known. But Vachel Lindsay did more for this city than add to its fame by the mere fact of his residence. Wherever he went, in Europe as well as the United States, he carried its name and gloried in it. He wrote of it and sang of it until Springfield, Ill., came to be coupled inseparably with his own name. And to his love for the city of his residence he added a faith, a vision, of a greater, finer city which will always be an inspiration to those who live here.

"The Vachel Lindsay Testimonial has been created so that those who wish to show to Mr. Lindsay's family their immediate appreciation of his contribution —which by its very nature never brought the financial reward it merited—can do so. A number of contributions have already been made, and many more have been offered. At the request of a number of those interested, the directors of the Abraham Lincoln association, acting as a representative civic group, have agreed to take charge of the fund and see to its appropriate disposal."

"Among the many new editions of works by and about Goethe," says the London *Observer*, "both editions de luxe and others more suited to the day's financial problems, the most monumental will come not from Weimar, the official centre of the Goethe organizations, but from Mainz, where the printer, Gutenberg, was born. From Mainz is now issued an appeal to the world to help Germany do homage to Goethe's memory. A world, or international, edition of his works is planned, in fifty volumes, whose text has been subjected to the approval of the director of the Goethe archives in Weimar, Professor Wahl.

More facinating than fiction!

Marie Louise
Napoleon's Nemesis

By J. ALEXANDER MAHAN

"The best piece of work which has come to our table this season." *The Argonaut.*

"He has the knack of relating history as if it were romance." *Montreal Star.*

"The author has rescued Marie Louise from ignominious nullity." *N. Y. Herald-Tribune.*

29 portraits *$3.75*

from CROWELL'S *List of Good Books*

THOMAS Y. CROWELL COMPANY, NEW YORK

A Check List for Christmas

FICTION

THE WAVES
Virginia Woolf
$2.50

BASQUE PEOPLE
Dorothy Canfield
$2.50

ALBERT CROPE
F. O. Mann
$2.50

S. S SAN PEDRO
James Gould Cozzens
$1.50

IN KRUSACK'S HOUSE
Thames Williamson
$2.00

THE CORN KING AND THE SPRING QUEEN
Naomi Mitchison
$3.75

ENDLESS RIVER
Felix Riesenberg
$2.50

NON-FICTION

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS
Illustrated, $3.75

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THE WORKS OF FRANCIS RABELAIS
Edited by Albert Jay Nock and Catherine R. Wilson
2 vols., illustrated, $15.00

THE BROWN DECADES
Lewis Mumford
$3.00

AMERICAN POETRY TO WHITMAN
Edited by Louis Untermeyer
$3.50

PORTRAITS IN MINIATURE
Lytton Strachey
$2.50

FOR CHILDREN

THE SECOND PICTURE BOOK
Photographs by Edward Steichen
Prepared by Mary Steichen Martin
Ages 1-4, $2.00

LITTLE PEAR
Eleanor Frances Lattimore
Ages 4-8, $2.00

THE STARS FOR SAM
W. Maxwell Reed
Ages 12-16, $3.00

AWAY TO SEA
Stephen W. Meader
Ages 12-16, $2.50

HARCOURT BRACE & CO.
383 Madison Avenue
New York

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Points of View

In Memoriam

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

May I bring to the attention of your readers a memorial prepared by a faculty committee of the University of North Carolina after the untimely death, last September, of Edwin Greenlaw, William Osler Professor of English Literature in Johns Hopkins University and formerly dean of the graduate school at the University of North Carolina? Higher education and scholarship have lost one of America's finest teachers and scholars and a singularly vivid and lovable personality. What he meant to his colleagues and to the culture of the nation has been indicated, in true and moderate terms, by Professor John M. Booker and the other signatories of the memorial, from which I may quote a few paragraphs:

"Professor Greenlaw's contributions to the nation's effort in the World War were directed with his characteristic ingenuity towards stimulating friendship for our allies through understanding of the French and English contributions to American civilization. His projected Lafayette Society developed no further than a prospectus. But he planned and edited War Extension Bulletins and a college text-book anthology entitled 'The Great Tradition' that attracted considerable attention. These revealed the same qualities that brought his later 'Literature and Life' such wide-spread adoption.

"This latter book he considered his main contribution to the art of teaching. Certainly it shows his penetrating detection of significant relationships and his artistic display of them. In conversation these faculties surprised and delighted with the force of sudden illuminations. In class they combined with informal lecturing, in which the casual manner concealed at first blush the compact thinking, to vary the rigor of his inductive method. This last was his favorite instrument, and in the use of it he was a master. His participation in graduate orals became a part of one's education. But artistry shaped his discipline.

"Enthusiasm for research, unflagging and unfeigned, animated Edwin Greenlaw from his earliest student contacts with acknowledged masters to his most recent direction of his own disciples, and sustained him zealously at work through the ebbing vitality of his last years—still collecting fresh material, still conceiving ambitious projects. He died as he lived—in the Quest. He had no patience with what he called 'intellectual dabbling'; and he regarded as pathological the student or scholar whom he had once diagnosed as afflicted with 'fatal facility.' The student found in him an exacting if exhilarating discipline; the fellow-seekers after truth, a warm response and an imaginative comprehension that moved easily from the library to the laboratory. Every investigator here knew that the mere nature of his effort secured for him in Greenlaw an intelligent, sympathetic, and powerful friend.

"Though more especially attracted as he was by the larger movements and wider trends in human culture as expressed in literature, his faith in sound and established methods roused him to eloquence in the gospel, to recall his own words, of 'the infinitesimally small.' His own productive work included distinctive contributions in the fields of medieval romance, Shakespeare, and Milton. It was, however, his numerous and stimulating studies in the poet Spenser and his circle that chiefly engaged his energies and won for him an international reputation. As only one witness to his standing in this field, may be cited the recognition that conservative English authorities accorded his brilliant exposition of Spenser's 'Mother Hubbard's Tale' in terms of the political, literary, and ecclesiastical conditions at Elizabeth's court. Professor Greenlaw's long application to Spenserian problems came to fullest flower in the conception and planning of a variorum edition of the poet, in which he was the guiding spirit. Not the least ironic touch of Fate upon this scholar was the circumstance that he barely missed taking into his hands the first volume of the Variorum."

NORMAN FOERSTER.
University of Iowa.

William Faulkner

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

The reviewing boys are at it again, I see. Now they've got Mr. Faulkner pinned right down. He spends his time in developing a technique. He knows what he wants to say, but he doesn't quite know how to say it. Well, well. And the reviewing boys say that if Mr. Faulkner doesn't pretty soon find out how to say what he wants to say he'll only be a promise.

What a fate for a Faulkner! Good Lord, how long does this kind of thing have to keep up? Faulkner is a promise. A promise of what? He can write, and as a man who can do that, he arrived long, long ago. His prose is as classic as the Parthenon. He never wastes a word. He is clear, crystal clear, so clear in fact, that he becomes difficult to follow. He can only be likened to the blinding brilliance of a superfine mirror. You lose perspective when you look at Faulkner. He knows his world. It may not be yours, or mine, but it is undoubtedly his. Guy Pene du Bois almost caught it in his picture. But the picture was muddy. Faulkner's Indians, Negroes, demi-reps, ex-anythings, feebs, and college boys are never that. They are clear and sharp like a knife. They move around in his crystal world and the brilliance of their moving blinds us.

Why all this analysis of his war stories? All about rounds, and projections, and points in space and consciousness. Does Mr. Faulkner care? Not the least little bit. You can't separate him out. You can't say, this is "the Faulkner." You can't say, this is good and this is bad. His things are neither. They are Faulkner. And they are all alike. This is the amazing thing about the man. He is the most consistent writer of prose that the current generation knows. He never slips; he never falters. He is always clear, clean, and crystal-like.

Faulkner doesn't like life. He sees it in its more ghastly aspects. He is bitter. To him it is all a fanfare of insanity, of something away from the norm. He doesn't care a sweet rap really to tell anyone about it. He sees it as only he, in all contemporary letters, sees it. And he writes it that way, with a startling clarity, and a bitter and telling brightness. That is his forte, his strength. He has a point of view. And he presents that point of view consistently. He doesn't preach. He doesn't care enough. Whether he makes the Academy—God forbid!—or not, is of no importance at all. He paints his life as he sees it. And he sees it with the unblinking, and uncaring, eye of a microscope. Why, you don't even shudder at him. And that is clarity of vision and presentation for you, if anything ever was.

Why don't these reviewers of American letters read and let their reading go at that? Why do they feel called upon to rationalize a critique of writing for us? Who cares any more? It's all o.k. for college professors and other religious. But for ordinary human beings who read and either like or not like, it is all so much apple-sauce.

Faulkner can write, and is writing, a prose that is searingly clear, and beautifully consistent, as is no other prose in contemporary American letters. When you read Faulkner, you read Faulkner. You get him. You know what he thinks of life and you see it as he does. That is all that matters in any art. And that is what makes him great. It makes him a bigger force than his themes. It makes him the thing that counts. It makes him what Arnold Bennett said, "An American who writes like an angel." William Faulkner, a bitter soul, who lets you know about it.

But the reviewing fraternity must pin him down, and eventually they'll give him a degree, or they won't give him a degree. But they'll always heave a sigh over the promise of what might have been.

Soft music, professor, something like hearts and flowers. It is to laugh!

BERTRAM ENOS.

Autographed Door

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

As to the autographed door from Frank Shay's bookshop mentioned recently in the Bowling Green: As recently as a year and a half ago, when I left New York for what I hope was not the last time, the door (or at least an autographed door, bearing, as I recall, among other names, Johnnie Held's, Bobbie Edwards's, and Christopher Morley's) was reposing well toward the back of Daca's shop, on Washington Square South. It may, of course, have been moved elsewhere since, or sold up the river to some millionaire collector; but I give you the clue for what it may be worth.

Omaha, Neb. W. GAFFNEY.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

It is intended to publish, in the near future, a volume of the letters of my uncle, the late *Father Gerard Manley Hopkins*. Many are available, but others are thought to exist in the hands of his various correspondents or their successors. The work of the editor would therefore be made simpler, and the value of the eventual collection be increased, if owners of such letters would be kind enough to lend them to me for the purposes of copying. As is usual in such cases, the letters will be returned under registered covers, and every care will be taken of them while they are out of their owners' hands.

GERARD HOPKINS
Amen House, Warwick Square, London, E. C. 4.

MACMILLAN BOOKS for CHRISTMAS

STUART CHASE
MEXICO
In collaboration with Marian Tyler
WILL ROGERS says: "Don't fail to read Stuart Chase's wonderful book, *Mexico*. It's the greatest thing you ever read on any country." 75th Thousand. $3.00

EDWIN A. ROBINSON
MATTHIAS AT THE DOOR
WILLIAM LYON PHELPS says: "It reveals the foremost living American poet in the plenitude of his powers." Limited $25.00; regular $1.75

JOHN MASEFIELD
MINNIE MAYLOW'S STORY
The new collection from the Poet Laureate; "a source of pure pleasure." Limited $25.00; regular $2.50

HAMLIN GARLAND
COMPANIONS ON THE TRAIL
The author of *A Son of the Middle Border* writes a book "full of good, old-fashioned enjoyment." $2.50

LEWIS BROWNE
SINCE CALVARY
"The story of Christianity was never more interestingly told."—*Saturday Review* $3.50

JOHN R. OLIVER
ARTICLE THIRTY-TWO
A story of a clerical family by the author of *Victim and Victor*. $2.50

GRANT SHOWERMAN
ROME AND THE ROMANS
"A popular and richly illustrated account of daily life in Rome."—*Chicago Post* $5.00

JEFFERSON B. FLETCHER
THE DIVINE COMEDY
A new translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*: "by far the best I have ever seen."—*C. H. Grandgent* Limited $25.00; regular $5.00

EDMUND K. BROADUS
THE STORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
"One may look far and wide before finding a more spirited, enlightened and truly absorbing story of the history of English literature."—*N. Y. Times* $5.00

HENRI FAUCONNIER
MALAISIE
The Goncourt Prize Novel
A story of the Malay jungles "as glamorous, magical and enduring as Hudson's *Green Mansions*."—*Philadelphia Inquirer* $2.00

C. F. ANDREWS
GANDHI AT WORK
The third volume of Gandhi's autobiography. $2.50

ROBERT P. T. COFFIN
PORTRAIT OF AN AMERICAN
"Rich and overflowing book ... should be placed alongside *A Son of the Middle Border*."—*N. Y. Herald Tribune* $2.00

SIR A. H. ROSTRON
HOME FROM THE SEA
The hero of the *Titanic* disaster tells the story of his life at sea. $3.50

CHARLOTTE KELLOGG
THE STORY OF JADWIGA
The story of Poland's great queen—"a life of high romance."—*N. Y. Sun* $2.50

ARTHUR POUND
NATIVE STOCK
The rise of the American spirit as seen in six lives. $2.50

R. DOUGLAS BOWDEN
IN DEFENSE OF TOMORROW
A new balance sheet of America which won the "Soul of America" Prize. $2.00

OTTOKAR FISCHER
ILLUSTRATED MAGIC
Magic, tricks, illusions and puzzles, explained in text and illustrations, by an expert. $5.00

THE CAROLINA LOW COUNTRY
A beautiful book about the Carolina coastal region by Members of the Society for the Preservation of Spirituals. $5.00

C. G. DARWIN
THE NEW CONCEPTIONS OF MATTER
A new book on modern science in the great tradition of Eddington, Jeans, and Whitehead. $3.00

Save time and shopping troubles by phoning any bookstore for these books

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY — NEW YORK

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Belles Lettres

RENAISSANCE VISTAS. By MAUDE FIERO BARNES. Payson. 1931. $2.

This book is a very odd mixture of bare study outlines, half-page appreciations of great artists, and fantastic essays reconstructing the spacious times of Lorenzo de Medici. There are many misprints, frequent distortions of historical fact, more enthusiasm than scholarship or literary tact. This material served to edify a girl's finishing school some ten years ago. It is hard to see any good reason for perpetuating it in book form.

THE SAILOR IN FICTION AND DRAMA. By *Harold Francis Watson*. Columbia University Press. $3.

HERDER AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF GERMAN NATIONALISM. By *R. R. Ergang*. Columbia University Press. $4.50.

THE HILLS OF HOME. By *George A. Slater*. Rudge. $1.50.

THE COLOR-SENSE IN LITERATURE. By *Havelock Ellis*. London: Ulysses Bookshop.

THE ROMANCE OF TRISTRAM AND YSOLT. By *Thomas of Britain*. Translated by *Roger Sherman Loomis*. Columbia University Press. $1.50.

THE CLINIC OF A CLERIC. By *W. A. Cameron*. Long & Smith. $2.

Biography

THE REAL ROMANOVS. By GLEB BOTKIN. Revel. 1931. $3.

The most interesting thing about Mr. Botkin's somewhat ingenuous narrative is, naturally, his conviction that the much-talked-of and mysterious woman believed by some to be the Grand Duchess Anastasia is actually the daughter of the murdered Czar of Russia.

Mr. Botkin is the son of Dr. Eugene Botkin, the personal physician of Nicholas II, who was killed along with the members of the royal family in Ekaterinburg. He and his sister, although not in Ekaterinburg on the night of the general murder, had been taken to Siberia with the exiled Romanovs, and he knew well and saw the Grand Duchess Anastasia shortly before her supposed death. To have him come out so emphatically on the side of those who believe that the unhappy woman recently living in a sanitarium near New York is really the Grand Duchess has, therefore, its special force and interest, to be weighed, together with all the other circumstances of this extraordinary case, for what they are worth.

Mr. Botkin believes that Anastasia was taken, while still unconscious, from the pile of bodies dumped in the wood on that July night in 1917, by a Russian Polish soldier, and after a terrible journey across Europe, during which she gave birth to a son, arrived in Berlin. The man himself was found dead in one of the streets of Bucharest. The author traces the various steps in the lurid story up to the day when he himself, having gone from New York to Europe to satisfy his curiosity, waited in a corridor in the Duke of Leuchtenberg's castle for the mysterious woman to appear.

> The door opened, and on the threshold stood—Anastasia! Frail, emaciated, her face showing clearly traces of her sufferings, older by many years, yet, nevertheless as undeniably Anastasia as I was my own self! It would be futile on my part to attempt to describe what I felt and thought at that moment. I made one last effort to assemble and focus every scrap of scepticism I had entertained in this matter, but in vain. I was standing face to face with Anastasia.

The nightmare of poisonous intrigue which has swirled about this unhappy woman is set forth in great detail by young Mr. Botkin, who, naturally, in spite of what seems here his evident disinterestedness and sincerity, has been accused by the anti-Anastasists of himself plotting for his own advantage. It is all, to say the least, a melancholy enough picture of the pretty complete moral demoralization of a considerable portion of the upper reaches of the Russian emigré crowd, including most of the surviving Romanovs. To most Americans this record of plots and counter-plots, lying, bribery, and general obscurantism, will read more like something from the Middle Ages than anything that seems to belong to the world of today.

Anastasia herself, real or sham, has had the unhappy gift of alienating most of those who have tried to befriend her. Her recurring fits of anger and general crankiness, however explainable, doubtless now represent a pathological state, and seem to have made her all but impossible to live with. This is the natural, realistic, and contemporary aspect of a tragic mystery, which, in another generation, will almost inevitably drift across the frontiers of romance. The mere existence of doubt, in a situation so astounding—and Mr. Botkin's fervent declarations, at least indicate that there is a doubt—will attend to that.

KARL BARTH. By *Wilhelm Pauch*. Harpers. $2.

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE, ESQ. By *H. A. S. Dearborn*. Edited by *James Barnes*. Princeton University Press. $5.

MUSCLING IN. By *Fred D. Pasley*. Washburn. $2.

PRESIDENT AND CHIEF JUSTICE. By *Francis McHale*. Dorrance. $3.

CONFESSIONS OF A BUSINESS MAN'S WIFE. Sears. $1.75.

FRANÇOIS VILLON. By *Lewis Wharton*. 2136 Pentland Road, Victoria, B. C.

Fiction

THE CORCORANS. By MARK LEE LUTHER and LILLIAN C. FORD. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1931. $2.50.

This is a capable if not inspired record of four generations in America. The original Corcoran came over from Ireland in 1850, worked with pick and shovel, saved, invested, founded a fortune and a family. The narrative proper begins half a century later, with the arrival of Matt Corcoran's first great-grandchild. Matt himself is much alive at the christening in the big brownstone family "mansion" on Madison Avenue. This was in 1907, a tricky moment in the reign of the great Teddy at Washington, which financial magnates laid to his trust-busting mania. Grandfather Gideon Corcoran was head of the Corcoran Trust Company. His son Martin was father of the babe. Between Martin and his brother Edward was some business rivalry, also the distaste of clashing temperaments. These younger Corcorans are extremely civilized and correct. Old Matt, whom they revere, is rather a bull in their social china shop. He loves to tell the tale of his early days, and some of it is wincing matter for his polite descendants.

Such is the layout of the chronicle. The forces at work among these Corcorans are the familiar forces we have followed with such care among the Forsytes and Beaminsters and Whiteoaks of recent story. For all their intramural jealousies and treacheries and exacerbating differences of taste and temper, a strong clan-feeling holds the Corcorans together, and forbids them any sort of free and independent existence. This enslavement to the family type and interest is harder for the younger generations, but even they cannot escape. The question of property, as always in this type of tribal fiction, is important. Who will rule the clan when the present ruler passes? Who will come in for the controlling interest in the family wealth? Not altogether happily, the chroniclers have tried to give new color to their legend by the melodramatic device of throwing doubt on the paternity of the child whose christening serves as take-off for the narrative. Martin the husband and father, supposed to be an exceptionally intelligent person, is convinced by the first breath of malicious report that his wife has played him false with a former rival. And at his first word of suspicion his wife leaves him for good. He plunges into the warfare of big business. Old Matt has left control of the family Trust Company to Martin's virtuous brother Edward. Martin makes it the passion of his life to build up a rival company and in the end to take over the Corcoran Trust, reducing Edward to a subordinate position.

Meanwhile Alicia his wife lives in seclusion, and their child grows up without knowing her father. Alicia has never recovered from the shock of his brutality. The girl Ann grows up a member of the new generation, sound enough but accepting the jazz-and-cocktail standards of her contemporaries. She survives for a happy and normal mating. As for Martin and his ill-fated Alicia, their story grows more unreal as it goes on. He is supposed to get her back, having seen the error of his ways. But he never becomes human, and nobody cares much when Alicia disposes of him in the good old-fashioned manner. On the whole, this book is readable for its scenes, its atmosphere, its vivid detail, not for any solid character as a chronicle of living persons and their destiny.

THE FLOWER OF LIFE. By THOMAS BURKE. Boston: Little, Brown. 1931.

The Thomas Burke of Limehouse has, for the moment at least, given place to a stronger, more serious artist. He still writes of the London east of Mayfair, but the somewhat facile exoticism of the earlier stories is gone, and in its place seems to have come a splendid sympathy and understanding. In "The Flower of Life" we read the brief hostory, (it is hardly 28,000 words) of Jane Cameron, one of the incorruptible poor, the veritable pattern of gnarled, but resolutely respectable poverty. Jane Cameron was born poor, lived her life poor, and we leave her in the middle sixties at the gate of the workhouse; but always stronger than the relentless economic pressure was her determination to preserve her own integrity, her determination to remain independent. Ultimately, of course, the world broke down her pitiful defenses, but the struggle had been heartrendingly gallant. This undistinguished, Quixotic life Mr. Burke sees as significant of all the downtrodden stepchildren of London, and Jane Cameron, though more British than universal, becomes a figure representative of much that is admirable yet suicidal in the souls of many men. She was far too honest, far too straight, for her own peace of body and mind. Yet no one of us would dare to say that she was wrong.

Mr. Burke evidently paid quite as much attention to the form of his narrative as to its substance. The result is almost wholly to the good, and would be without flaw were there not occasionally a suspicion of slickness, did we not here and there catch sight of Mr. Burke behind the scenes pulli[illegible] and pushing the scenery around. In other words, the book is just faintly overmanipulated in the interests of artfulness. This is not too obtrusive as one reads the story, however, and fear of hearing the backstage rumble need deter no one from reading an otherwise splendid piece of fiction. Mr. Burke writes with vigor and with a notable sensitiveness to words; frequently he has lingered over a paragraph, a sentence, polishing and rephrasing, until it becomes exactly right, perfect for its place. And always he keeps his temper in the face of obvious temptations to the contrary (Jane Cameron's life is not pretty, and we sense a bitter indignation against society only slightly below the surface). All in all, the story is a little jewel, not perfect, but fundamentally sound, and with an extraordinarily attractive surface.

It is interesting to speculate: Mr. Burke presents the poverty of Jane Cameron in a London that knows neither the war, nor the dole, nor current hard times. She is shown against a static background of normal, pre-war social conditions. Is her life possible in our days? Would her respectability have been as incorruptible during the last decade? Or is the attitude of the London poor here pictured by Mr. Burke an attitude that has already passed into history, an attitude killed by the widespread acceptance of organized post-war charity?

HUNTING SHIRT. By MARY JOHNSTON. Little, Brown. 1931. $2.

The narrative here is quite without complexity. Hunting Shirt, a young Scotch settler in eigteenth century Virginia, sets out upon an errand of chivalry. His beloved had lost her necklace during the scurry to shelter just before a Cherokee raid on the village, and an Indian brave had found and appropriated it as an adornment of his person. To find Fire Tree, the Cherokee, and to regain the necklace became the mad quest of Hunting Shirt, the idealist. He is away from King's Valley for almost two years, but the search is finally successful.

Now, surely, this little story would have less than the stature of a novel were it not

"In distinction of style, in truth of characterization and emotion, in humor and in saddened thoughtfulness the essence of Galsworthy." —The Atlantic Monthly.

Maid in Waiting

the new novel

by John Galsworthy

"Merely as a story, 'Maid in Waiting' makes the ordinary run of fiction seem thin and tepid. It has the rich but elusive quality that marks old rugs and old wines—a maturity and richness and bouquet that can be experienced but not described."—*Chicago Daily News.*

$2.50

The Virtuous Knight
by Robert E. Sherwood

A vivid novel of the Crusades by the author of "The Road to Rome." "One of the few richly distinguished historical romances to appear within the past year."—*New York Sun.* $2.50

Hurricane
by Nahum Sabsay

"A novel of the 1917 revolutions in Russia that not only is historical but also contemporary and a tale that one is glad not to have missed."
—*Springfield Republican.* $2.50

Snug Harbour
the collected stories of
W. W. Jacobs

"One omnibus book that ought not to be missed. If Jacobs were compulsory reading, education would be popular again."—*Philadelphia Ledger.*
58 stories, 680 pages. A Scribner Omnibus Book $2.50

Penhally
by Caroline Gordon

"The triumphant tragedy of a house and the vindication of a mode of life. I think it the best novel that modern America has produced."
—FORD MADOX FORD. $2.50

Lesby
by Elizabeth Willis

"In its rugged and loamy quality, in the strength of its story, and in its steady, close-to-the-soil narrative rhythm, 'Lesby' is an arresting piece of fiction."—*New York Herald Tribune.*
With frontispiece in color by N. C. Wyeth $2.00

Big-Enough
by Will James

"Combines the lives of a boy and a horse as inseparably and convincingly as it presents to us the American West and an absorbing story."
—*The Nation.*

With 70 drawings by the author $2.50

at your bookstore

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, NEW YORK

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books for Christmas II.

By AMY LOVEMAN

WE were about to talk of books on Russia when we were forced to an abrupt close last week. Not the least interesting of them is one which perhaps is to be regarded primarily as noteworthy for its pictures rather than its text though its account of a young American girl's travels through the Soviet state is a lively and enthusiastic one. Margaret Bourke-White's photographs for her "Eyes on Russia" (Simon & Schuster), however, are the significant portion of her book; they are magnificent, and an impressive portrayal of what is going on in the erstwhile country of the Czars.

Miss Bourke-White's book, indeed, might serve as a gift for your artist friend as well as for the one whose interest is in *government* or *travel*. For him, at any rate, you should have little difficulty in choosing a volume that should be welcome for there is a varied list from which to make selection. Sir William Rothenstein's "Men and Memories" (Coward-McCann) and W. Graham Robertson's "Life Was Worth Living Then" (Harpers), both of them full of interesting reminiscences of noted personalities of the British artistic world, are delightful reading. For those who prefer their art in the form of pictures there is Rollin Kirby's "Highlights" (Payson), a cartoon history of the nineteen-twenties, "The *New Yorker* Scrapbook" (Doubleday, Doran), and "The Works of John Held, Jr." (Washburn). Your photographer friend will rejoice in Heinrich Schwarz's "David Octavius Hill" (Viking), and the one whose passion is horses in Lida Fleitmann's "The Horse in Art" (Payson). For the sculptor there is the Baroness Helene von Nostitz's "Dialogues with Rodin" (Duffield), and for him and the student of ancient civilizations Sir Flinders Petrie's "Seventy Years in Archæology" (Holt).

From art we pass to poetry and here we offer you a group of books which should satisfy lovers of verse.—George Dillon's "The Flowering Stone" (Viking) and Alan Porter's "The Signature of Pain" (Day), if your friend would see some of the work of two of the most excellent of the newer poets: "Minnie Maylow's Story" (Macmillan), by John Masefield (though we fear admirers of the laureate will be disappointed in this latest work of his), Robinson Jeffers's "Descent to the Dead" (Random House), "Panama or the Adventures of My Seven Uncles" (Harpers), by Blaise Cendrars, translated by John Dos Passos, and Ogden Nash's "Free Wheeling" (Simon&Schuster), a clever and entertaining volume of very free verse indeed, by the author of "Hard Lines." Then there is for those who would rather read of old poets than new poetry, "The Letters of Robert Burns" (Oxford University Press), by W. DeLancey Ferguson, "Shelley" (Norton), by Norman Hapgood, and the revised version of Mabel Loomis Todd's edition of the "Letters of Emily Dickinson" (Harpers). Also, don't forget that any lover of great poetry ought to rejoice in the chance—if he cannot read it in the original—of making the acquaintance of "The Sonnets of Petrarch" (Longmans, Green), in so excellent a translation as Joseph Auslander's.

The same group of friends to whom the reading of poetry is a delight undoubtedly takes interest in well-informed literary discussion. To them you might send Max Eastman's "The Literary Mind" (Scribners), Henry Seidel Canby's "Classic Americans" (Harcourt, Brace), or a biography like that of Bret Harte (Houghton Mifflin), by George R. Stewart, Jr., "Fenimore Cooper" (Minton, Balch), by Robert E. Spiller, or Jean Jacques Rousseau (Harcourt, Brace), by Matthew Josephson.

There's your lawyer friend still unprovided for. He might like "The Great Mouthpiece" (Covici-Friede), by Gene Fowler, the biography of the noted criminal lawyer, William J. Fallon, "Muscling In" (Washburn), by Fred D. Pasley, a chronicle of gangs and gangsters, "Chicago: A Portrait" (Century), by Henry Justin Smith, just to gain an insight into the beauties and attractions of a city which has lately been attaining an unenviable celebrity through its lawlessness, and an interesting discussion, a by-product, we believe, of the Wickersham Commission investigations, "Our Lawless Police" (Viking), by Ernest J. Hopkins.

Well, that writes the lawyer off your list and ours. Now for the business man. If he is historically minded, he might derive much interest from reading Halsted L. Ritter's "Washington as a Business Man" (Sears) or James A. Barnes's "John G. Carlisle: Financier" (Dodd, Mead). If he is more concerned with the problems of the day than with those of the past give him "Successful Living in the Machine Age" (Simon & Schuster), by E. A. Filene, one of the great merchants of Boston, "Graft in Business" (Vanguard), by John T. Flynn, who not long since was writing on the investment trusts, "The Public Pays" (Vanguard), by Ernest Gruening, a study of power politics," "Frankenstein, Inc.," by I. Maurice Wormser (Whittlesey), or "Business Adrift" (Whittlesey), by W. B. Donham.

And now we have reached the last special category on our list, that of the musician. Choose for him from among "Letters of Giacomo Puccini" (Lippincott), "Schumann" (Knopf), by Victor Basch, "Richard Wagner" (Norton), by Paul Bekker, "Chopin: Collected Letters" (Knopf), by Henry Opienski, and "Verdi" (Knopf), by Francis Toye.

At last, at last, we approach our close. There remains but to present to you a miscellaneous list upon which to draw. But since first we recounted the fiction there has come in to us a novel of one of the *Saturday Review's* own staff, Christopher Morley, who has published a tale, "Swiss Family Manhattan" (Doubleday, Doran), which we, for one, enjoyed thoroughly. This entertaining volume is a gay book, but under its smiling humor lurks some sharp and acute satire on our present-day civilization. Modesty, however, prevents our going into further praise of the work of one of our colleagues. To swerve away from him, we offer you the following titles as likely to meet the tastes of a varied group: "A Naturalist in Brazil" (Houghton Mifflin), by Konrad Guenther, "America Hispana" (Scribners), by Waldo Frank, "On Understanding Women" (Longmans, Green), by Russell Lord, "Heathen Rage" (Long & Smith), by Gerald Stanley Lee, "The Gardener's Friend and Other Pests" (Stokes), by George S. Chappell and Ridgely Hunt, and "Pegasus Perplexing" (Viking), by Le Baron Russell Briggs, the volume of charades of which the *Saturday Review* published a portion during the summer.

And now, a Merry Christmas and good reading to you!

The New Books
Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

reënforced by some sustaining material. Miss Johnston finds her reënforcement in a heavily stylized prose and in a quasi-heroical interpretation of Hunting Shirt's experiences. Whatever happens to him is described with a pregnant and portentous simplicity; thus, she implies, might some epic hero have gone on a journey and remained faithful to his vision. To some extent she is successful, but frequently a weaker tradition infects the heroic note, and in those moments Hunting Shirt seems not wholly distinct from the Hardy Woodsman, a stock figure for generations in yarns for the young. Miss Johnston's elaborate heightening of her material makes her lapses into convention at once noticeable. And all the way through the tale she writes with a too conscious eye for effect, falling into tricky syntax and odd, implausible idiom.

Yet there are obvious merits. The life of the Virginian frontier is solidly, convincingly laid before us; in the development of this background, Miss Johnston's experience of over thirty years in the writing of historical novels stands her in good stead. We sense vividly the desolate valley communities, the river roads, the solitary night camps. A feeling of spaciousness makes an impact upon us, and, during the journey of Hunting Shirt, time and distance become ponderable. But, when we have found these things in the novel to praise, we come back, a bit fretfully, to the inflation and the pretentiousness of the narrative, and to the underlying aridity of the whole book. Probably the casual reader will think the novel much smoke and little fire. And he will be substantially right.

THE SILVER STAR. By JACKSON GREGORY. Dodd, Mead. 1931. $2.

Mr. Gregory is one of those hard-working Western-story writers for a reading public that depends upon novel-lengths satisfying in heart beats, hoofbeats, and gun play. As should be expected from a Native Son who sticks to his soil, "The Silver Star" is another California story. In a way it is Bret Harte-ish, for its action involves the revived old mountain mining-camp of High Town, and the sundry typical California mining-camp characters who have descended from the days of Poker Flat. In keeping with the atmosphere the scenery employs no automobiles, although the use of cant phrases indicates the present time. Rather, there are fleet horses, and worthy Judge Bull's saddle mule. The plot hangs upon the moral regeneration, invoked by vengeance, of the pallid, sure-shot gambler Steve Cody, to whom passes the star of his murdered father, sheriff-elect. Corinna Lee dreams of a knight, come riding with a shining silver star, and the rules of sure-shot fiction require that in such a light of romance the bronzed young rancher, Dave Laribee, shall manfully resign the field.

WAR PAINT AND ROUGE. By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS. Appleton. 1931. $2.50.

Mr. Chambers's new novel follows a pattern which since the days of "Cardigan" he has used with increasing frequency; a picturesque and historical background, a heroine in boy's apparel, a strong and noble hero who can better manage any number of enemies than one difficult girl, and so on. This time the period is that of the French and Indian Wars. This is comparatively fresh ground, and though Mr. Chambers attempts no such serious addition to the reader's information as in "The Man They Hanged," still he makes full use of all the handsome back-drops and make-up promised in his title; he is generous with Indian rites and fine eighteenth century ceremonies. There is not much to criticize, favorably or unfavorably, in the details of the piece. Mr. Chambers has worked out a formula which evidently pleases him and a large number of readers; he is in no need of being recommended, since most people know by this time whether or not they will like a new book of his, but for his formula he may be congratulated.

GRAPES OF CANAAN. By ELMA EHRLICH LEVINGER. Boston: The Stratford Company. 1931. $2.50.

Here is a jumble of "Main Street" and "The Matriarch." The hero, Abe Kupper, manufacturer of "Kupper's Universal Garters for Gentlemen" might say: "and such a jumble!" Mrs. Levinger attempts to give us "the tale of a Jew who has become a figure to reckon with in his community, respected alike by his fellow Jews and his non-Jewish neighbors." She forgets that the job has been done quite well by the author of "The Rise of David Levinsky," and proceeds to chronicle her hero, who begins by selling needles and thread from door to door in Mortonville, and ends as a grubby little Napoleon encircling the globe with garters. In the meantime his bossy mother dies, his son gets killed in the war, his sister dies through an illegal operation, his brilliant nephew leaves the business Kupper had hoped he would carry on, but a grandson is born to him, to fulfil that function.

The book, which received the Stratford $2,000 prize, is filled with Ralphs and Joes and Beatsys and Moes, with meetings of Jewish charity boards, and involved campaigns in synagogue politics; in its attempt to be kaleidoscopic, it is myopic, and dull. Fragments of characters emerge, like shoulders and toes out of a blurred canvas. Abe Kupper is seen more or less in the round, but rather than being respected he is a subject to be shrugged away by his "Jewish and non-Jewish neighbors." It is difficult to understand that a publisher has awarded this book a prize, even beyond the prize of publication.

TWO BLACK SHEEP. By HARRY LEON WILSON. Cosmopolitan. 1931.

Mr. Harry Leon Wilson has a place of his own. He is one of our leading writers of light fiction without being exactly a humorist or a romance writer, and without being at all a sentimentalist—the three categories into which writers of light fiction usually fall. He has perfected a form of his own, a kind of novel in which there is an atmosphere that carries the comfortable assurance from the first page that everything will come right in the end but in which the interest is not in the satisfactory development of the plot but in the company of characters who arouse affectionate amusement, a kind of novel whose incidents are often funny but which one remembers not for its humor but for its good humor. His novels are very slight, because they are too pleasant to reflect the world as it is, and want the creative imagination necessary to make a convincing world of their own as Dickens for instance does; but they are nevertheless among the most valuable of the books intended for pastime.

"Two Black Sheep" is unfortunately not among the best of his books. It is the story of a French nobleman who has fled to America and taken a job in a garage to escape a marriage of convenience, and of a *gamine* who is a born actress, who dramatizes herself in one magnificent lie after another until she makes her predestined success in the movies with the help of the absurd press-agenting that Mr. Wilson knows so well how to caricature—perhaps one should say to represent, since eye-witnesses seem to be agreed that the facts are beyond caricature. The characters have not the memorable warmth of Merton, Ma Pettengill, or Cousin Jane, and the extreme naive credulity of the hero, in particular, is nearer the line of farce and frank absurdity than Mr. Wilson usually allows himself to go. But the story is told with the author's customary skill, and is altogether a highly amusing book.

LOVELIEST OF FRIENDS. By G SHEILA DONISTHORPE. New York: Claude Kendall. 1931.

This case-history of a Lesbian is a record, in novel form, of the physical and spiritual disintegration of a happy, normal young woman under the influence of another woman, charming but not so normal. Oudrey Desmond's six years of marriage have been full of glamor, and her life with its pleasant little dinners and bridge games, its gay preoccupation with her husband and her house, has been singularly untroubled. Then Kim Sherrill comes back from South Africa and sets out deliberately to seduce Audrey. The outcome is inevitable, though Audrey struggles against it at first. The rest of the story is a depressing series of emotional crises, until Audrey, tortured by jealousy, is driven to an unsuccessful suicide.

It is not an important book, but the author knows how to hold the reader's interest. It is more sensational and vastly less interesting from the psychological point of view than "The Well of Loneliness."

THE INTIMATE LIFE OF THE QUEEN SHEBA. By NORMAN HILL. Sears. 1931.

Queen Maheda of Ethiopia emerges from Mr. Hill's novel as an utterly delightful woman of great beauty and wit whose only lapse is in letting herself be taken in by the amorous wind-bag, Solomon king of Judah. Maheda, something of a bluestocking in her day, is attracted by stories of the wisdom, riches, and charms of Solomon and takes herself off to Jerusalem for a visit. She explores the mind of her hero and is apparently satisfied with the results. Nor is she disappointed in his person. She absorbs what wisdom she can from the Wise Man and then falls in love with him. It can hardly be said that Solomon "learned about women from her," but at least she was a new and exhilarating experience. In time Maheda returns to Sheba and bears Solomon's son Menelik. Menelik thrives and is a credit to both parents. When he is of suitable age he pays a visit to his illustrious father, who is by this time slightly shopworn, and ready to make the clever and attractive youth his heir. But Menelik is loyal to his mother and to his country and returns to them, having stolen the Ark of the Covenant which had made a great impression on Maheda in her romantic youth. Maheda dies, believing that Solomon still loves her, an illusion fostered by her faithful admirer, Balbek, who writes letters in the best vein of the Great Lover.

It is an entertaining tale, cynical and sophisticated, and rather touching in its re-creation of an ardent and generous-spirited woman who set no limits on her love.

ENDORA'S MEN. By MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT. Macmillan. 1931. $2.

Half a well-informed picture of a small New England town as it faced the news

(*Continued on next page*)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

X Y Z writes in to ask for books of a nature to which he can refer for guidance in his odd-jobbery around the place. "Tinkering with Tools," by H. H. Saylor (Little Brown), I can recommend from experience; it includes about everything that has to be done about a place, even electrical repairs of not too difficult a nature. "Carpentry for Beginners," by J. D. Adams (Dodd, Mead), is another useful house-book; it gives detailed practical directions for making many things needed at home. These would be good for a country house or on a one-man farm, where the owner must have at his finger tips the knowledge with which the old-fashioned New England handyman seemed to have been born.

I. S., Madison, Wis., asks for the name of a book published not long ago which described games for two people, and asks if there is a book on bridge for two. "Games for Two," by Emily Stanley Warren (Harcourt) has flowered in time for a winter when I am given to understand people are beginning to discover what their own houses look like in the evening. This book gives directions for four kinds of "honeymoon bridge," and for eight other kinds of two-handed card games, for backgammon, camelot, dominoes, and anagrams.

For some reason the readers of this department seem turning their minds to travel at this time of year, as recent replies must have indicated; I am continually called upon to aid in making out travel plans. If any of them are planning to walk in England—and nothing makes so nearly perfect a vacation employment—let them purchase "The Story of the Road," lately published by Alexander Maclehose in London; I understand that Macmillan will bring it out here somewhat later, and then I may have more to say; meanwhile I will but tell prospective travellers either on foot or in motors that this is a pictorial history of roadmaking through the ages (as one might guess from the beautiful etching on the jacket) with the sort of information an expert only can give to an interested but uninformed pedestrian. And speaking further of travel, with which maps are bound up, Paul Paine, the peerless picture-map-maker of Syracuse, has made a map of the history of Pennsylvania quite as good as his famous "Map of Good Stories," and to be welcomed quite as warmly. This tells what happened at Valley Forge, where the Whisky Rebellion rebelled, where Mary Jemison was captured, where the Gettysburg Address was given, and a mapful more. Washington, who is about to take possession of the papers, may have been born and died in Virginia, but most of the important events of his career seem to have taken place in the Keystone State. I do not know the publisher, but no doubt it may be bought from the Syracuse Public Library.

L. D. B., New York, is getting together a collection of books on prose writing, especially in problems of style. I trust that he has laid the cornerstone of this collection with "Better Writing," by Henry Seidel Canby (Harcourt); this is the first book to give all young people with a longing for print, and they can keep it at hand as long as they go on writing. Be sure to own "Style," by Sir Walter Raleigh (Longmans), and "On the Art of Writing," by Sir A. Quiller-Couch (Putnam), two works already classics, and two other books full of ideas, W. C. Brownell's "Genius of Style" (Scribner) and "The Problem of Style," by Middleton Murry (Oxford Univ. Press). Herbert Read's "English Prose Style" (Holt) has been quite lately added to what is to me a list of indispensables; not that I use them to write by but that I am constantly referring some inquirer to one of them. "The Knowledge of English," by George Philip Krapp (Holt), is a fine reinforcement of interest in our native tongue as a living language; another book to give one a strong impetus is "English as Experience," by H. C. Tracy (Dutton). Two valuable manuals for practice are "Writing through Reading," by R. M. Gay (Atlantic Monthly Press) and "Sentences and Thinking," by Norman Foerster and J. M. Steadman (Houghton). To these the lover of words will add two books by Janet Aiken, both published by Ronald: "English; Past and Present," a history of the changes in our words in sounds as well as in meaning, and "Why English Sounds Change." These are reliable and stimulating.

L. E. R., Piney River, Va., collects information on cryptography and has what Poe has to say about it, "America's Back Chamber," Simon & Schuster's "Cryptogram Book," by Buranelli and others, and Macbeth's translation of Langie's "Cryptography." I nominate as additions "Secret Messages," by P. B. Thomas (Knopf): "The Greek Cryptogram," by A. S. Hunt (Oxford Univ. Press): Walter Arensberg's "The Cryptography of Shakespeare" (Howell)—with whatever you can find of the Ignatius Donnelly cipher literature; a small book of original limericks in cryptogram, published by Sully, and as a grand climax and combustion the prize cryptogram of all, the Newbold "Cipher of Roger Bacon," published by the University of Pennsylvania Press. This is illustrated by photographs showing the elaborate intricacies of tiny pothooks, tinier than typeflowers, that make a secret language in the midst of the drawings with which the book was originally adorned.

Miss Katherine Ferguson, Director of Health Education of the Y. W. C. A. at Lansing, Michigan, sends this further advice to the inquirer about the place of sports in American life: John J. McGraw's "My Thirty Yers in Baseball." "The Athlete's Garland," a collection of verse on sports, compiled by Wallace Rice. "The Geography of Games," in the *National Geographic*, August, 1919. Chapter nine, on recreation, in Edward Yeoman's "Shackled Youth." "Tennis," by Helen Wills. "Walking; a Fine Art," edited by Edw. F. Bigelow. "The Book of Winter Sports," by W. Dustin White. Two collections of poems made by W. Haynes and J. L. Harrison, "Winter Sports Verse" and "Fisherman's Verse," "Poetry of Sport," edited by Hedley Peek. From what I have been hearing of the popularity of "Play the Game" (Viking) with readers in libraries through the country, this should be a welcome list to readers' advisors. *E. B., Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada*, adds to the list of novels in which nurses appear, an earlier novel by Edith Wharton, "The Fruit of the Tree" (Scribner, 1907), saying that "the nurse is well done—better than the hero!"

The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

of the approaching Civil War and half a genealogical melodrama is "Endora's Men." Romance flowers in the little town under the shadow of impending war and one of the three closely interwoven love stories brings about a separation of families in Massachusetts and Virginia. The ending comes in the fourth generation when the last of the Northerners, a shell-shocked doctor, marries the entirely capable daughter of the Southern line, herself a doctor. The hero regains his mental powers and all ends as all should end, happily. Between North and South the book maintains the terribly conscientious fairness of a New Englander who still possesses emotional convictions about the Civil War. Behind its romance the book contains a slightly sentimentalized, perhaps, but nevertheless veracious and colorful picture of the New England which marched South, after the minister's sermon, singing with more determination than music "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

THE GENERATIONS OF NOAH EDON. By DAVID PINSKI. Macaulay. 1931. $2.50.

This book is a representative in power and in sentimental flow not only of the works of David Pinski, but of an entire generation of Yiddish authors. Perhaps because their chosen language remained a by-stream in the flow of world literature, their novels retain a folk-strain of moralization, and an effect of posed characters that is not unilke the stiffly arranged wedding photographs in the neighborhood photographer's window. Yiddish novels done into English have the air of farmers come into the big city: homey, sturdy people, touchingly awkward.

Pious Noah Edon and his good wife Marah come from Brishitz, Lithuania, and set up a crockery store in America, "which is New York." Their three sons, Moses, Asher, and Chaim become Murray, Oscar, and Charles.

Moses marries a wholesaler's daughter and eventually becomes one of America's richest merchants. "I am business," he says. Oscar becomes a lawyer; Charles, who wants to be a writer, becomes a physician.

Moses' wholesale wife Sylvia seduces his brother Charles. When remorseful Charles leaves her, she sets off on a "society" career, with a succession of lovers. Charles marries a nurse. Oscar is captured by a home girl.

Norman, son of Moses, grows up in love with Zelda, daughter of Oscar. Both children are cold-blooded. Norman laughs on seeing a man killed. Zelda scratches people.

Charles, Jr., fasts secretly a whole day in order that God may prevent President Wilson from declaring war. Disappointed, he becomes slightly cynical. He grows up to seek social reforms.

The family crashes when Oscar's quiet wife, on the eve of his supreme court nomination, runs off with her chauffeur. Norman and Zelda seek relief in an all-night auto-ride, fight over the wheel, smash into a tree, and are killed, Zelda's father, Oscar, hangs himself. Norman's father, Murray, at last demands divorce of his notoriously unfaithful wife.

Charles, Jr., remains to the patriarchal Noah to talk of "the road to the higher level of man."

The conflict, to Mr. Pinski's mind, is between the goodness inherent in the Edons, and the evil of their new environment. The Edon grandchildren can never become like other youngsters; they are made strangers by their heritage of Ten Commandments morality. This much is made clear through the angelic presentment of aged Noah, who is never anything but good, and who is somewhat of an anachronism in a novel that otherwise attempts to be realistic. But the negative side of the picture is never substantiated. Mr. Pinski does
mental evil tha
third generation,
istence.

On the whole, the novel is powerful. Mr. Pinski is at his best when describing children, and his chapter on young Charle's secret fast is masterly. It stands so far above the rest of the book, however, as to appear to be a short story grafted into the novel.

The anonymous translation is capable, though occasionally blemished by such lines as "He clasped her to him, and impressed on her lips the tenderest kiss."

Religion

THE INDISPENSABLE SOUL. By WILLIAM H. CRAWSHAW. Macmillan. 1931. $2.50.

HAS SCIENCE DISCOVERED GOD? A Symposium of Modern Scientific Opinion. Edited by EDWARD H. COTTON. Crowell. 1931. $3.50.

RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR. An Introduction to the Psychological Study of Religion. By DAVID M. TROUT. Macmillan. 1931. $4.

In the first of these books, the soul is defended as postulate without which much of man's experience cannot be explained. In the second, science tells us that we may still believe in God—though some may share Julian Huxley's doubt whether the God in whom (or in which) science permits us to believe is of any particular value to religion. In the third, a surprise is sprung, and a psychologist is seen studying not religious beliefs, nor religious emotions, but religious behavior. These three books are far above the current average of "religious" books in interest and importance.

To say that Dean Crawhaw gives no new arguments in defense of the soul is not to dismiss his book as unimportant. "The Indispensable Soul" is important for the reader who has been disquieted by the attacks of behavioristic psychology on mind, consciousness, soul, and who is befuddled by the technical discussions of the specialists. One suspects that Dean Crawshaw did not write for philosophers and scientists, but for the average man who has found out that thought is after all nothing but "the action of language mechanisms" and that the soul, along with all higher values, can safely be dismissed. Mechanism, he says, denies the soul. But human experience can't be explained without the hypothesis of the soul. To be sure, you can't precipitate a soul in a test-tube; you know the reality of the soul by intuition, which is the soul's own keen insight. The soul is a "lonely ghost" living in an "inherited house" but the ghost is not the house. The difficulties of this mind-body dualism are real, but not insuperable; and the difficulty of reducing mind to actions of the body is insuperable. Dean Crawshaw's solution seems very like that of Hans Driesch. Altogether, he offers a wholesome antidote—for those who need it—to popularized mechanistic psychology.

A geologist, five physicists, three astronomers, three biologists, two psychologists, a psychic researcher, and one who is hard to classify, so wide are his interests, contribute to "Has Science Discovered God?" Nine of the contributions were written for this book, seven were drawn from other books. The whole is a useful compendium on the science-religion question by Mather, Millikan, Eddington, Curtis, Conklin, Einstein, Huxley, Patrick, McDougall, Thomson, Pupin, Langdon-Davies, Stetson, Jeans, Lodge, and Bird. As one would expect on reading the names of the contributors, there is in parts of the book some rationalization of early religious faith. But mainly the book is notable for rigorous definition of the limitations of the scientific method, for clear distinction between objective facts and subjective values, for scientific agnosticism, and for a beautiful reverence before a universe which, whether scanned as macrocosm or probed as microcosm, inspires the feeling of the numinous in its investigators. Fourteen of the papers deal with the major religious problem, the problem, of God; the last two deal solely with the problem of personal survival after death. It is interesting to plot the curves, so to speak, of the theism of these men of science with reference especially to their answers to these questions: Is it the business of science to be looking for God? If one is forced to the conclusion that God is the universe, or the Absolute, or the Unknowable behind phenomena,
perhaps suggesting that religion must get along without a God in the sense of a Person watchful over the affairs of men?

With "Religious Behavior," Dr. Trout enters a field which has been worked pretty thoroughly by anthropologists and sociologists but neglected by psychologists. Psychologists have, to be sure, investigated vagaries of religious belief and varieties of religious experience. Indeed they seem to have been preoccupied with religious convictions (which may or may not have anything to do with conduct) and with religious emotional disturbances (in which the religion frequently dies out with the emotion.) But here is a psychologist who is primarily interested in how people act when they are being religious, not what they believe or how they feel.

(*Continued on page* 403)

By MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Golden Tales of New England

Seventeen complete stories, delightfully interpreting the New England spirit and the manners and characteristics of its people. A book to make exiled New Englanders homesick, or to afford strangers a perfect introduction. Chosen from the foremost New England writers and from obscure sources as well. Excellent for story telling material as well as general entertainment.

Illustrated, $2.50

Decorations by Lois Lenski

DODD MEAD & COMPANY
New York

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Foreign Literature

Charles Albert

CARLO ALBERTO, PRINCIPE DI CARIGNANO. By NICCOLO RODOLICO. Florence: Le Monnier. 1931.
CARLO ALBERTO INEDITO. Edited by FRANCESCO SALATA. Milan: Mondadori. 1931.
LETTERE DI CARLO ALBERTO A OTTAVIO THAON DI REVEL. Edited by GIOVANNI GENTILE. Milan: Treves. 1931.

Reviewed by IRENE DE ROBILANT

THE centenary of Prince Charles Albert's accession to the throne of Piedmont and Sardinia has furnished the occasion for several books containing interesting viewpoints and particularly new and valuable documents illustrating the reign and personality of this somewhat enigmatic and much discussed sovereign.

Carlo Alberto, Principe di Carignano, by Rodolico, offers little new in the way of information, but is an able and well written exposition of the facts as they have been transmitted to us by historians of various tendencies of which the contradictory evidence and frequent inaccuracies are pointed out. Apologists such as Costa de Beauregard are spared just as little as the indictments of both Santarosa and Brofferio. For the famous event of 1821 the Prince is exonerated from the charge of duplicity, but the only real excuse for his weak and uncertain conduct is offered by his youthful age. Born in October, 1798, he was only twenty-two at the time, a fact which has evidently not been given sufficient consideration. Concerning the Prince's exile in Florence, the heroism displayed at the Trocadero, which had the result of ingratiating him with the reactionary King of Piedmont, Charles Felix, and actively discredited him with the liberals, little is said of any novel interest. As a matter of fact Rodolico leaves his subject on the steps of the throne in April, 1831, that is in the most inglorious period of Charles Albert's life.

In a study dedicated to the Prince's youth one might have hoped to find further details than those in our possession concerning the years he spent at school in Geneva, and the personality of his teacher, the protestant pastor, Mr. Vaucher, "from whom I learnt the little I know," writes the King, while a contemporary observer notes that "the influence of this noted atheist could not have been other than despicable." Mr. Vaucher called on Charles Albert in Turin at a time when the liberals accused him of being a mere tool in the hands of the Jesuits, and yet this "atheist" was received with the utmost cordiality. Protestant influence played an important part in the early history of Italy, and while it is particularly evident in the life of Cavour, even the "Jesuit bigotry" displayed by Charles Albert shows a noticeable strain of Calvinistic fatalism.

The other two books, even more than by the names of their distinguished compilers recommend themselves by the importance of the documents which we peruse for the first time.

"Carlo Alberto Inedito," with notes and introduction by Senator Francesco Salata, gives long abstracts from a diary which ever since the King's death had been hidden in the Piedmontese archives of the Di Robilant family, whose devotion in the King's service fully explains the valued possession. The pages of the published diary were written in the years 1831-32 and then again in 1838. It may be possible that the parts relating to the cruel repression of the liberal movement in 1833 have been purposely withheld, although the compiler says that other parts of the diary may still be awaiting discovery in some family archive, and that it may also have been regularly kept only in the periods of comparative quiet during which the King had time to note both the important and minor incidents of his daily life. At any rate the closely written pages were never intended for publication, and from a purely sentimental standpoint they are hardly a tribute to the memory of the author. The King's interest and success in enacting progressive measures which brought about the administrative and penal reforms published in 1842 are strangely in contrast with his belief in the excellency of absolute and paternalistic rule, and his hatred for liberalism, which for him was synonymous with Jacobite republicanism, license, and atheism.

The diary as well as the other important documents which Senator Salata has had the good fortune of retrieving from Austrian archives indicate that the story of Charles Albert ought to be rewritten in its entirety. He does not deserve the hard judgment of some of his contemporaries, which Mr. Thayer reiterates, probably out of sympathy for Cavour, nor was he at heart a liberal or an "Italian Hamlet" as consequent romanticism has endeavored to demonstrate.

Mr. Salata's book has an excellent sequel in "Charles Albert's Letters to Ottavio Thaon di Revel," issued with an introduction by Senator Gentile. The latter belong to a far more interesting period as far as historical events are concerned, as they were written from the field during the war of 1848, shortly after the proclamation of the Italian Constitution. Although endowed with exceptional physical courage, Charles Albert had a timid and undecided nature. His life was one long struggle between what he believed to be his sacred trust, and the destinies of Italy for which he was willing to sacrifice, if not his principles, himself. Outside pressure brought about the proclamation of the Constitution and the adoption of that three-colored flag which had been one of the King's nightmares. Much as he hated liberals, his dislike for Austria was even greater, and the latter sentiment superseded the former. The sad failure which put an end to the campaign of 1848, the petulance and wrangling which soon divided the Piedmontese patriots from those in other cities, as well as created divergencies among themselves, are in no record so evident as in the letters to Thaon di Revel who was at the time the King's most trusted minister.

Charles Albert's real moment of greatness came the following year. With the almost certainty of being beaten he once more rallied the Piedmontese Army and declared war on Austria. The end came in Novara, and in order to secure better conditions from Field Marshal Radetsky, he abdicated in favor of his eldest son, Victor Emanuel of Savoy. Under the assumed name of Count di Barge, he was allowed to pass through the Austrian lines. The latter have claimed that he was recognized, and that the words "God Speed Your Majesty" accompanied him as he proceeded towards Nice. That such magnanimous conduct is purely legendary is proved by an Austrian document included in Senator Salata's book. Unsuspected Charles Albert passed the frontier, was recognized, and cordially received in both France and Spain. The journey as well as the tragic events of the last year had seriously undermined his already failing health, and death relieved him of his troubles only a few months after he had established his residence in Oporto, Portugal.

That the declaration of war in 1849 was a decisive step in the making of Italy has been established beyond discussion. That Charles Albert did not realize the signal importance of the part he played, is certainly a far greater tragedy than his solitary death on the banks of the river Duoro.

Bertrand K. Hart, writing in the *Commonweal* of contemporary Irish writers, says: "Winifred Letts is a shoy and winsome lady, enormously thankful for a slender favor done, and poet to her dainty fingerprints. We all went over to help somebody give a collected purse to AE on the occasion of something-or-other. A mountainy spirit in the crowd cast a dark thought on the gift because Russell was going to America: Twenty years I have said it. He will die there! Everybody laughed. But everybody shuddered. The mist hangs so steadily over the land, and prophets have no-whither. Gogarty was being gay with his new and comfortably-priced hotel out in Connemara's wilderness. (I like McKeown's, at Leenane, and I shall go there one day for a great time.) I wish I could print the amazing come-all-ye ballad about Oliver St. John Gogarty giving two swans to the River Liffey, but Willy Baldwin, the author, who gave me his original draft of it, swore me to silence. And then suddenly Stephens went off to Paris. Joyce was already there."

The Compleat Collector.

RARE BOOKS · FIRST EDITIONS · FINE TYPOGRAPHY

Conducted by Carl Purington Rollins & John T. Winterich

"Now cheaply bought for thrice their weight in gold."

In Our Time

THE rare booktrade measures the extent of the perduring cataclysm by describing it as the only panic that ever affected book prices. This condition of itself is significant testimony to the spread of the collecting habit inside a generation. Time was—in 1907, for example—when collectors occupied a world apart, coveted a few conventional specialties, and competed with each other genteelly, and in the face of whatsoever wringing of economic withers, until everybody was supplied.

Book collecting has not yet become altogether a pauper's avocation, but the field has broadened down until it includes thousands of active enthusiasts who must needs respond to the pinch when the pinch comes. Three and four years ago and more, but especially three and four years ago, the members of this group were buying five, ten, twenty, one-hundred-dollar items — occasionally five-hundred and thousand-dollar items. There was, for example, the collector who in the gay old ante-bellum era desired greatly the only known contemporaneously inscribed copy of an American classic that was originally issued in the days when Ulysses Simpson Grant was scattering cigar ashes over the White House carpets. (Neither the collector, nor, for the collector's shrinking sake, the book, shall here be identified more accurately than this.) He could have the book for five hundred dollars. To let it be noised abroad, or even across the street, in that age of innocence that one would even contemplate paying that much for a book even if one had that much to pay for it would have been to court the gratuitous attentions of an alienist. The collector did have five hundred dollars—he had reared this pinnacle of opulence, jot by jot and tittle by tittle, in order to buy himself a trip to Europe. Abandoning his status as a border-line case, he burned his bridges behind him, crossed over into the acknowledged realms of lunacy, forewent the argosy, and bought the book. It is now worth a king's ransom, even in a day when there is very little ransom and hardly any king.

But three and four years ago is lang syne in the book trade as it is in the anvil, thumbtack, and whalebone industries. Through circumstances as much beyond their control as beyond Mr. Mellon's and Mr. Wiggin's, the men and women who were then buying five and ten and hundred-dollar books are not buying so many books today. This is only another way of saying that for those who can still afford to buy rare books there will never be a better time to buy rare books than now. The present condition of the book market by no means signifies that it is reaping the inevitable harvest of inflation. Of course there was, a while gone, some inflation, though it touched only a few titles; there was even a little clever rigging, or rigging that looked clever at the time. But in the main the market was following the trend of the moment—a trend which the bookseller did not chart, and to which at times he attempted to apply a conservative brake. An evidence of this condition survives in the wide spread in price evidenced in many catalogues for the same item. There is still considerable groping, and it is by no means all a groping for buyers. Once the winter of the bookseller's (and everyone else's) discontent is over, there will be an end of groping, and the collector who could but did not take advantage of today's uncertainty will pay for his excess of caution.

The demand for desirable native items, both Americana and general literature, had been soundly asserted before the general crisis. These two great groups are still holding their own more satisfactorily than English literature. American books must now be bought on the home grounds, for the London bookseller is either out of stock or has had to scale down his prices to meet the new day. When the market for American items looked sharply up a few years ago the English bookseller saw the millennium on his doorstep and in an excess of vicarious patriotism advanced everything about America or by American authors to figures that in some instances approached the fantastic. He has learned his lesson, usually by keeping the books.

The English bookseller today is properly making much of the decline in sterling. The American bookseller is perforce readjusting the prices of his English items to meet the situation. If he has any rare American items in stock he no longer has to fear overseas competition. If he is so fortunately situated that he can maintain these at a safe remove from moth, rust, and thieves, he has only to wait for the end of a stretch of lean years which even the doughtiest pessimist does not set as high as seven.

J. T. W.

Limiteds Once More

LEWIS GANNETT'S recent fulminations in the New York *Herald Tribune* against the "limited-edition racket" and "the first-edition hucksters" was read by the book-trade with a catch in its collective throat. If only it were all true! If only limited editions *did* become rare books! The book-trade sighed, and looked at backroom shelves piled high with—but what profit specifying? It was only lately pointed out in these columns that many recent, and some not so recent, limiteds could today be had for half publication price. The times themselves have limited the limitation business more than the bitterest attack on the practice could ever hope to do.

The bookseller himself happens to be the most enthusiastic opponent of the limited edition, and close behind him (and perhaps ahead of Mr. Gannett) is likely to be the collector. Consider the bookseller's situation. A new book of verse is announced by Horace Epode, to appear (in addition to the "regular" edition) in a limited signed edition of ninety copies. Mr. A, the bookseller, has the names of ten Epode adherents in his files, and duly warns them of the imminence of the new limited. Eight of the ten order copies. Mr. A accordingly orders eight copies from the publisher. The book is issued—and Mr. A receives four copies. The limited edition, it appears, was heavily oversubscribed, and it became necessary to prorate copies.

Mr. A's task is now relatively simple. All he has to do is to decide which half of his eight clamorous customers are to be allotted the four copies. Then he has to write a letter to each of the luckless quartette and explain why he cannot accommodate. Then he has to sit back and await the explosion. Sometimes there is no explosion—he just never hears from that customer again. Sometimes he hears once—a parting shot telling him, at vitriolic length and often with considerable biological and genealogical detail, exactly what the customer thinks of him.

This is what is likely to happen, and what often has happened, when the limitation has been severely restricted. When the restriction rises from ninety to, say, five hundred and a thousand it becomes no restriction at all, and instead of having four books for eight customers Mr. A is likely to have ten books for five customers.

Mr. Gannett treads spongier earth in his offensive against the "first-edition hucksters." "A man, or a woman," he writes,

> who cherishes the first edition of Willa Cather's "O Pioneers," which he or she

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bought, and had the insight to cherish, twenty years ago; a man who bought an early Faulkner and understood its power, has a right to be proud of his possession. It does him honor. He will keep it. He has, however, nothing in common with the man or woman who goes to market today and buys an early Cather, or Cabell, or Faulkner because he thinks it will "go up." That man or woman is not a book lover—merely a speculator in artificial values.

But not everyone who goes to market today for Cathers and Faulkners does so as a speculator—and he who does, and there acquires a first edition of "O Pioneers!" learns instantly from the title-page that twenty years ago the book did not exist, so perhaps there are minor accretions of benefit even if one is a book speculator. And if some of our growing boys and girls happen to be introduced to Willa Cather by way of "Shadows on the Rock," must their Cather collections therefore arbitrarily begin with that title? On that basis only a handful of the inmates even of homes for the aged would be entitled to own copies of the first edition of "Leaves of Grass" or "The Scarlet Letter." and only Methuselah could legitimately possess a Gutenberg Bible.

J. T. W.

"Fresh Note" Printing

FASHIONS IN AMERICAN TYPOGRAPHY, 1780 to 1930. By EDMUND G. GRESS. New York: Harper. 1931. $5.

"WHERE do we go from here?" is a pertinent inquiry when one contemplates the exuberance of American typography. We have dug out the type cases of four hundred years to provide us with the raw materials for typographic thrills. It was William Allen White who said that Kansas has "raked the ash heap of failure and found an old human hoopskirt to elect as Governor"—and I am sure that the ash heap of typographic failures has also been examined. The result of this eclecticism has been painfully apparent in the past few years. We have revived the old types, some good and some bad. but we haven't tried very successfully to use them in their original manner nor in any real "manner" at all. What Mr. Gress suggests, if I understand him—though he errs by being a little too digressive—, is to "live mentally in the period selected," and then to reflect the period in printing done for the present.

To this end he has assembled a good many examples of printing since 1780, as well as pictures of the life of the periods, and has attempted to show how they may serve as models for current typography. What makes this the easier is that we have now a very large repertory of type faces at our command. We should learn to use these effectively, since we cannot, apparently, hope for the emergence of any new and distinctive style in the decorative arts. It may be that we have here a "fresh note" in American typography, but I incline to belief that it is a still further development of eclecticism, and that what we need is more of a simplification of taste and practice. However, Mr. Gress has made a concrete suggestion. R.

Viva

VV. By E. E. CUMMINGS. New York: Liveright. 1931.

OF e. e. cummings and his manhandling of the english language something later. This latest book by him has been set and printed in an interesting fashion by S. A. Jacobs at the Van Rees Press. It is a moderate sized tall folio—an unusual but successful format, well adapted to the contents. The title page is handled with a good deal of skill, although one must refer to the jacket to find out that the interlaced capital V's stand for "Viva."

Of the contents: years ago I proudly showed a Dedham plate (you know, the kind with the crackle) to one of our hard-boiled pressmen in the printing office. He gave it one curious look and said, "My old woman throws pie-plates away when they get cracked up as bad as that."

R.

Roxburghe Club

THE ROXBURGHE CLUB OF SAN FRANCISCO. The First Three Years. San Francisco. 1931.

NAMED in honor of the English society of book lovers, the San Francisco club was formed in 1928 by a group of printers and book lovers "to further a common interest in typography and the art of the book." The membership was at first limited to thirty-one—the original quota of the English society—but later increased to thirty-five. Informal meetings have been held about once a month, each one signalized by an announcement and a souvenir, donated by members. A collection of these souvenirs must be of much interest. The present book lists all of them.

This small book, printed by Johnck & Seeger of San Francisco, is a brilliant example of machine composition at its best. It is set in linotype Caslon, but carefully thought out and as carefully executed, as to typography, and printed with care on rag paper. R.

One of John Drinkwater's interests is in gathering postage stamps. His collection of those of the United States was recently sold in London, fetching the sum of £1,500. A St. Louis 5 cents (1845) was bought for £30, and a rare specimen of the 1 cent. blue (1851) for £23. He has decided to specialize in stamps of the Confederate States.

The fact has just leaked out that the anonymous purchaser of the Burrell collection of Wagneriana, which was sold in England last year, was Mrs. Curtis Bok, widow of the famous Philadelphia philanthropist and editor. The amount Mrs. Bok paid is not stated, but the original price asked was £250,000.

The New Books

Religion

(*Continued from page* 401)

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISSI. By ABEL BONNARD. Translated by CLEVELAND B. CHASE. Longmans, Green. 1931. $2.

M. Bonnard's little book on St. Francis is an interpretation rather than a life. Or it might be called a hymn of praise rather than either. It runs along like a pleasantly murmuring, limpid stream, so clear and shallow that one can see the bottom at all times. It is doing more justice than [illegible] good intentions of Fra[illegible] nardone, and the other mission. With regard to Francis, himself, stress is laid upon the poetic and unworldly elements in his character. The author's comments are occasionally illuminating; more often they are banal. His determination to see only the attractive features of medievalism, in much emphasized contrast to our degenerate modern period, prevents him from ever getting below the surface of his subject.

Religion

WAYS OF BELIEVING. By *Miles H. Krumbine.* Harpers. $2.

THE CHRISTIAN SAGA. By *Norman Towar Boggs.* Macmillan. $3.

JESUS CAME PREACHING. By *George A. Buttrick.* Scribners. $2.50.

THE LORD'S PRAYER. Illustrated by *Mary Elizabeth Given.* Vanguard.

THE CREED OF A VICTORIAN PAGAN. By *Robert Peel.* Harvard University Press.

A STUDY OF KOHLIL GIBRAN. By *Barbara Young.* New York: Syrian American Press.

THE WORLD ECONOMY OF BAHÁ 'U'LLAH. By *Horace Holley.* New York: Baháï Publishing Co.

PARABLES OF THE PRINCE, PART I. Des Plaines, Ill.: Maine Township High School.

WAR RESISTANCE. By *William Floyd.* Arbitrator Press.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO SAVIOURS. By *Albert J. Edmunds.* Chetenham, Pa.: Two Worlds Publishing Co.

COLLECTED ESSAYS AND PAPERS OF ROBERT BRIDGES. Oxford University Press.

GO BACK TO GOLD. By *Frederick Benham.* Fahr & Fahr.

Science

MICROBES AND ULTRAMICROBES. By *A. D. Gardner.* Dial.

MENDELISM AND EVOLUTION. By *E. B. Ford.* Dial.

SIGNALS FROM THE STARS. By *George Ellery Hale.* Scribners. $2.

LIFE IN NATURE. By *James Hinton.* Edited by *Havelock Ellis.* Dial. $3.

Travel

ON THE EDGE OF THE PRIMEVAL FOREST. By *Albert Schweitzer.* Macmillan.

THE TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO. Translated by *Aldo Ricci* from the text of *L. F. Benedetto.* Viking. $5.

Counter Attractions

NEW & OLD BOOKS :: COLLECTORS' ITEMS :: STAMPS & PRINTS :: LITERARY SERVICES

AUCTIONS

THREE IMPORTANT auction sales for January. First editions, American and English. Americana sale of the late D. A. French, and a fine complete private library of a Chicago collector. Catalogues free on request. We are always in the market for auction material. If you have rare books to dispose of, be sure to correspond with us. You are assured of reaching the widest range of collectors. Chicago Book & Art Auctions, Inc., 410 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, Illinois.

BARGAIN OFFERS

PRIVATELY PRINTED BOOKS. The largest publishers of privately printed and limited editions in the United States invite you to send for their free literature. Prospectuses on unexpurgated publications dealing with curiosa and esoterica will also be sent gratis to adults upon request. Panurge, Incorporated, 100 Fifth Avenue, New York.

"MEMOIRS OF CASANOVA," two volumes, unabridged ($15.00), our price $4.95. Send for catalog of unusual books. APEX BOOK CO., 246 Fifth Ave., New York City.

CATALOGS OF BOOK BARGAINS, current books. Riviere bindings. Free. Book Bazaar, 1740 52nd Street, Brooklyn.

BACK NUMBERS

BACK NUMBERS OF MAGAZINES at Abraham's Bookstore. 141 Fourth Avenue, New York.

BOOK PLATES

EROS BOOKPLATES—WOODCUTS Ultra modern designs in color. Holiday cards, embossed. Woodcuts made up. 10c samples; Desk S-R 72, 1609 N. Broad St., EROS BOOKPLATES, Phila., Pa.

BOOKBINDING

WHAT THE WELL DRESSED BOOK Should Wear. A Bennett Binding of Hand-Tooled Imported Leather—Morocco, Levant or Calf—Modernistic, Period or Conventional Design—According to Date and Content. Bennett Book Studios, Inc., Hand Bookbinders and Wholesale Dealers, 240 West 23rd Street, New York City.

FRENCH BOOKS

CHOSEN IN PARIS by our committee of distinguished editors—André Maurois, Abbé Dimnet and Comtesse de Chambrun—the monthly choice of the FRENCH BOOK CLUB, INC., is of definite literary value as well as good diversion. These famous authors examine the about-to-be-published books of all leading French houses, and choose for you the outstanding book of the month. These are delivered, by mail from New York, to our members: a book a month, the cream of French literature, for only $10 a year. Keep up your French studies in this practical way! Enroll today in the FRENCH BOOK CLUB, INC., 441 Lexington Avenue, New York City. Or write for further details.

"L'ILLUSTRATION" Christmas number foremost French weekly, profusely illustrated nearly 100 colorprints all suitable for framing. DeLUXE EDITION, $2.50. The French Bookshop, 556 Madison Avenue, "New York's Largest French Bookshop"—"Over 500,000 French books in stock." Big catalogue 20c stamps.

LIBRARIE VIDAL, 62 Rue Vaneau, Paris, immediately sends books of Literature, Art, Science, History, original or current issues. Write.

VISIT OR WRITE THE FRENCH BOOKMAN, 202 West 96th Street, New York. Catalogues, 5 cents (stamps).

GENERAL

YOUR COAT OF ARMS correctly and handsomely executed in water color. Authentic work guaranteed. William Stanley Hall, 132 Lexington Avenue, New York.

ODD CURIOS, unusual and extraordinary Books and Autographs. Write for catalogue. State your own interests. Union Square Bookshop, 30 East 14th Street, New York.

SEARCHING FOR WANTS my Specialty. Rare. Firsts. Cover United States, Europe. Joan Peters Books, 60 Greenwich Avenue, New York.

LITERARY SERVICES

STORY IDEAS FOR PHOTOPLAYS, talking pictures, magazines. Accepted any form for revision, development, copyright, and submission to markets. Established 1917. Free booklet gives full particulars. Universal Scenario Company, 411 Meyer Bldg., Western & Sierra Vista, Hollywood, Calif.

MATHILDE WEIL, LITERARY Agent. Books, short stories, articles and verse criticized and marketed. Special department for plays and motion pictures. The Writers' Workshop, Inc., 570 Lexington Avenue, New York.

YOUR MANUSCRIPT SHOULD BE sold! This office sells plays, novels, short stories, published books or produced plays for motion pictures. International connections, publications planned. Editor, literary advisor. Grace Aird, Inc., 551 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

AUTHORS—BEFORE Submitting Manuscripts to publishers consult us for expert editorial, marketing opinion. Moderate reading, revision charges. Riggs and Riggs, 1 University Place, New York.

LITERARY SERVICES

MANUSCRIPTS ANALYZED, criticized, revised, prepared for publication, marketed. Book manuscripts a specialty. Twenty-five years' experience as writer, editor, publisher. Helpful textbooks. Catalogue. James Knapp Reeve and Agnes M. Reeve, Box A, Franklin, Ohio.

HAVE YOU A MANUSCRIPT THAT needs polishing, editing and typing before it can be submitted for publication? Send it to us. We have done work of this sort for established authors and we can assure you that your manuscript would receive expert attention. Our prices are reasonable. If you would care to submit your manuscript, we shall be glad to give you an estimate of the cost. Address Editorial Service, c/o The Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

OUT OF PRINT

OUT-OF-PRINT Books promptly supplied. National Bibliophile Service, 347 Fifth Avenue, New York.

TYPOGRAPHY

PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS' BOOKS; Designed and made according to the finest principles. S. A. Jacobs, 3 Milligan Place, New York.

SCHEDULE OF RATES

THE ADVERTISING RATES FOR THIS classified page are as follows: For twenty or more consecutive insertions of any copy minimum twelve words, 7 cents a word for one insertion; for any less number of insertions 10 cents a word for one insertion. Copy may be changed every week. The forms close Friday morning, eight days before publication date. Address Department GH, The Saturday Review of Literature, telephone BR yant 9-0896.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from THE INNER SANCTUM *of*
SIMON *and* SCHUSTER
Publishers*, 386 Fourth Avenue, *New York

NEW YORK
Herald Tribune
Best Sellers
December 5, 1931

The following is a list of the best sellers in fiction and nonfiction at Arthur R. Womrath's, Inc., the last week.

NONFICTION

"Bernard Shaw," by Frank Harris (Simon & Schuster).

"Mourning Becomes Electra," by Eugene O'Neill (Liveright).

"The Great Mouthpiece: William J Fallon," by Gene Fowler (Covici-Friede).

Even *The Inner Sanctum's* most exuberant expectations for *Bernard Shaw* by FRANK HARRIS have been exceeded by the furore of the press and the unanimity of the best-seller lists.

LAURENCE STALLINGS summed up the critical acclaim when he called it "a rare book—a new form in autobiography." Here HARRIS discusses SHAW—and HARRIS; and SHAW discusses HARRIS—and SHAW. It is an audacious and intimate volume teeming with letters and overflowing with table-talk. To call it merely a biography is to miss the central flavor and fascination of the whole uninhibited performance. Here is the sword-play of titans—the living letters and conversation of perhaps the two greatest controversialists of modern letters.

"Bernard Shaw by FRANK HARRIS," says *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*, "is an exciting, stimulating biography, keenly dramatic and spicily controversial. Books of this caliber are monuments of genius."

THIS YEAR GIVE BOOKS

Make this a fireside Christmas. . . . This Year Give Books. . . . Is there any field in which a given dollar can go further, or more glamorously, than in a bookstore? . . . For proof of this, dip into *Bernard Shaw* by FRANK HARRIS. . . . Or try these other best sellers, real or potential, from *The Inner Sanctum*. . . . *Free Wheeling* by OGDEN NASH, even funnier than *Hard Lines*. . . . *Phantom Fame* by HARRY REICHENBACH and DAVID FREEDMAN, the true anatomy of ballyhoo. . . . *The New Believe It or Not*, by ROBERT L. RIPLEY (Series Two). . . . *Eyes on Russia* by MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE. . . . *The Book of Ballyhoo*. . . . *One-Two-Three* by SIDNEY (Battle-of-the-Century) LENZ. . . . or if you really want full details, send for The Inner Sanctum's special Christmas List, which has just been prepared for your guidance by

ESSANDESS.

To make a pleasure out of Christmas Shopping . . . try doing all of it with us.

BOOKS

from everywhere, on all subjects, of all publishers, including a distinguished Children's Department. *Books are low in price but high in value*

. . . Old BOOKS
. . . Rare BOOKS

The rarities of today and the rarities of tomorrow. The soundest investment in the world. The gift unique. New catalogue available.

. . . Gift BOOKS
. . . LIBRARY SETS

The best editions handsomely bound in guaranteed acid-free leather. Moderately priced.

DUTTONS

681 Fifth Avenue at 54th St.

Call PLaza 3-7400 for Individual Service

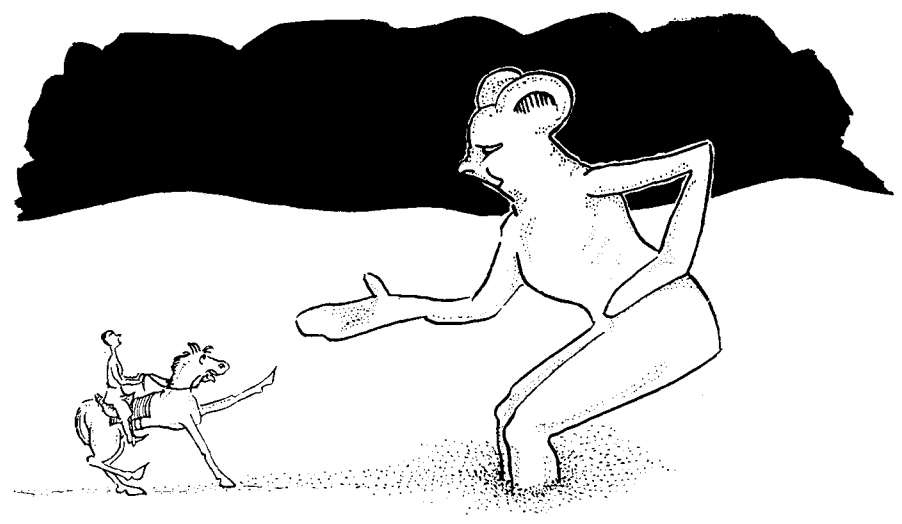
CURRIER & IVES CARDS

Now you may have Currier & Ives Winter Scenes, Racing Subjects, Country Days, Rural Scenes, as your Christmas Cards, Faithful reprints — on fourfold buff stock, quaintly hand-colored, these cards have real Christmas atmosphere. There are 18 subjects, and each subject comes in the 5 x 6" and the 3 x 4" size. The cards may be ordered blank or with simple, appropriate Christmas greetings. Send for our sample Currier & Ives card folder.

5 x 6" size—15c. 3 x 4" size—10c.

Beaux Arts, 55 W. 45th St., N. Y. City

The PHŒNIX NEST



THE above is something that recently happened to us. It was in a dream. We were riding an interminable sandy desert when we met The Depression. You can see how affable The Depression was. But that didn't seem to do us a darn bit of good. We woke up in a fright. . . .

And speaking of dreams (as one is afraid to nowadays), of dreams both by night and by day, we have been reading (with our odd taste) a novel that we haven't heard much roaring about but that appeals to us down to the ground, a novel by one *Maude Meagher* (whose imagination is anything but) entitled "Fantastic Traveller" and published by Houghton Mifflin. If you live at all in your imagination it may appeal to you. It is the story of a man whose dreams might have made him a writer but who made no use of his imagination save thereby to escape the world. We know of no other book just like it. We see by the inner leaf of the book's dust-cover that the author wrote a previous novel called "White Jade," which *Priestley* and *McFee* and others recommended. We hope the publishers (broad hint) will send us it, as we never came across it. "Fantastic Traveller" has passages of great beauty. The few characters are well-drawn. But the inner life of David is the kind of thing we have always wanted to write prose about, and here is someone who has done it, if not perhaps to the Queen's, certainly entirely to our own taste. A grand book, we think, for a quiet evening at home. At one point, when his life is becoming complicated, the reading of a chance book on heraldry suddenly apprises David of the fact that the Wyvern really had one pair of legs. "Now he had always visualized the Wyvern as having two." So had we. And we were quite as excited over that piece of information as was he. He then begins to imagine a dragon of his own, "calling it, say, the Kafworm, and making it live under the Kaf, or Caucasus mountains, hard by the enormous emerald there that is the centre of the world and gives the sky its color." David is an addict of *Marco Polo* and of *Sir John Maundeville*, as we used to be. "Hippogriffs and Lindworms, Basilisks and Harpies, Cockatrices, Salamanders, Lamiæ and Stelliones; the Manticora with its trumpet voice, and a star on the end of its tail—hm. Better have a few friendly Centaurs to keep order. And the Phœnix with wings of feathered flame in the air above." So he imagines "the emerald chasm of Kaf." And the next thing is " 'I don't feel I wholly understand you, David,' said Lilian unhappily." What girl would? Yet there is nothing the matter with David save that he can extract more pleasure from living in a crystal world of the imagination than from any reality that may happen to him. Though a grown man, and an able one in his occupation, he prefers to spend his spare time not listening to the radio or going to movies, but getting material from books wherewith to create extravagant dream palaces, cities, and countries. He never writes any of it down. It is simply another life that he lives. It is a better drug to him than bridge, golf, drink, night clubs, or some other feverish activity about nothing at all. It is the kind of thing that makes most women perfectly furious. And so he hurts deeply his beautiful and devoted sister Evelyn and the Lilian with whom he has an affair, and doubtless a number of others—we haven't yet finished the book. But we're awfully glad it has been written and we shall await Miss or Mrs. Meagher's next flight with unusual interest. . . .

Recently we viewed at the Marie Harriman Gallery on East 57th Street, *Picasso's* illustrations to "Les Metamorphoses d'Ovide," published by *M. Albert Skira* of Lausanne, Switzerland. They were something to see. The book, we understand, is terrifically limited,—Mrs. Harriman has only a very few copies in this country,—and equally expensive. But it is certainly a rarity that the connoisseur will wish to possess. . . .

We have ourself been guilty of saying things were "swell," so with ashes upon our head we give the following anonymous contribution to the world, addressed, most unfortunately, "To you whom it concerns." We don't know who the author is. It just came in through the mail without any identifying monicker. (But perhaps the author won't like "monicker" either!)

There is a word that beats upon the brain,
Like to the echo of an idiot's cry
Telling the world its thought, but God knows why
Only one note it has in its refrain.
It is a word having too long a reign
Among the "chosen few" who tell us why
And what the better book there is to buy,
And needs make use of slang this to explain.
Books can be "good" (that word's not over-used)
They can be "read with profit to the mind";
Be given credit, merit, and enthused
Deservedly upon, and slang consigned
As should that word that sickens with its "swell,"
(If there is such a place) down into Hell.

We don't recommend that as a sonnet, but we do, after all, agree with the author save in his or her "enthused deservedly upon." If there is a word we don't like it is "enthused." We also hate "glimpsed," and we simply abhor "intrigued." . . .

E. Phillips Oppenheim lately received in his mail a letter from the Anti-Weapon Association. He is evidently being adjured to discourse less of pistols, stilettos, and the like. . . .

SCRAP-BAG (Instalment Three)

THE PORTION OF LABOR

Bland and rotund, equipped with glasses
And fat cigar and genial smirk,
He talked about the laboring classes
As though he'd really heard of work.

PUZZLE

Wild is my blood. My blood is shepherd
To gentlest thoughts in me.
Can't one admire both a leopard
And an anemone?

POLITE CONTRADICTION

You know my work, you say. An anodyne
If you have found it, even, for ills that irk,
I'm glad,—perhaps one fairly decent line
If you have found. . . . But you don't know my work!

THE PHŒNICIAN.

OLD CALIFORNIA in delightful reminiscence in Katherine Bell's new book, "Swinging the Censer," illustrated. A vital contribution to Americana. "A saga of original California crowded with interest." "Fascinating reading . . . rare and lovely literature." Includes the true story of Conception Arguello, Jack Powers and his gang, Ned McGowan, etc. At your bookseller, or $2.75 postpaid from

L. E. SMITH, P. O. Box 1398, Hartford, Conn.

John Mistletoe

"A Book that will Sell Slowly and Live Long."

$2.50 DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

The Smallest Publishing House in the World

HENRY, LONGWELL & ANOTHER

tenaciously reminds you of

NOTES ON BERMUDA

By Christopher Morley

★★★ On Sale at the more great-hearted bookshops, or to be had direct from our Primum Mobile, Mr. F. C. Henry, 244 Madison Ave.

★★★ A small but perfect example of printing skill from the honored press of William Edwin Rudge.

★★★ In the ecumenical economic depression we are as depressed as anyone; therefore we sell this strangely beautiful little book for the minuscule price of $1.

★★★ Our Advertising Department is inexperienced and forgot to mention the strong imaginative writing in this halcyon bibelot.

$1 CASH WITH ORDER

HENRY, LONGWELL & ANOTHER

ASHland 4-6800, New York City

(Ask for Miss Mahler)

"1931 is going to be a year when good books held back because of adverse conditions are to be released in a Fall season which will be a good season if the American public still cares to read and knows its opportunities."

Dr. Henry Seidel Canby
September 12, 1931

BOOKS ARE IDEAL GIFTS —AT ALL BOOKSTORES—

The American Booksellers Association

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED